Daily Report

Latin America

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NOTICE TO READERS: An * indicates material not disseminated in electronic form.

NOTICE TO READERS CONCERNING ENVIRONMENTAL SUMMIT: *Further reportage on the UN environmental conference in Rio de Janeiro will be published in special Latin America DAILY REPORT supplements.*

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Nicaragua

Foreign Minister Leal, reacting to the planned reduction of U.S. aid, said "the democratic process will not deviate one millimeter from Mrs. Chamorro's plans," EL NUEVO DIARIO reports. Leal said "we will accept no conditions." "They are entitled to their opinions about how we should carry out reforms, but we will continue to follow our own guidelines. We will continue to tackle the problems of property and professionalization of the police and Army," he said. A group of 50 members of the National Assembly issued a declaration, LA PRENSA reports, supporting efforts by President Chamorro to reinstate the U.S. aid. "Through this patriotic gesture of solidarity, we urge the U.S. Congress to expedite the delivery of the promised aid," the declaration says. A pronouncement by the Social Democratic Party explains that the U.S. aid action could be attributed to Sandinist influence over President "Chamorro's democratic government," Managua radio reports.

Guatemala

Government Minister Hurtado explained that the U.S. DEA does not have any legal power in Guatemala, that it only supports the security forces, particularly the National Police and the Treasury Police, against drug trafficking, EL GRAFICO reports. That is necessary, the minister said, because government authorities "cannot fight and control drug traffickers on their own." The DEA participates in extraditions because Guatemalan authorities must hand over the accused persons to U.S. authorities, which DEA agents represent. Hurtado said the DEA takes measures "to preclude either an attack against the accused person or an attempt to escape." But he says the "power belongs to the Guatemalan security forces. They relinquish control of the accused persons only when such persons are handed over to the U.S. authorities."

Venezuela

President Perez announced a crackdown on the violent disturbances that follow student protests, which have resumed in the capital and surrounding areas, according to an AFP report. Perez announced "a head-on struggle against individuals and extreme left groups that take advantage of the student protests" to "promote a new rebel adventure." In answer to rumors about a new suspension of constitutional guarantees, especially the right to strike and stage demonstrations, Perez said, "As president, I have never restricted the demonstrations of citizens." But, "as president and commander in chief of the Armed Forces, I am not ready to tolerate the extremist aspiration of promoting a new rebel adventure." Caracas TV reports that Interior Minister Pinerua Ordaz said that constitutional rights have not been suspended as the result of the disturbances.

Haiti

Port-au-Prince radio reports that ousted President Aristide "is asking the international community to take measures against the current regime." The appointment of Bazin as prime minister is "illegal," he says and asks for "an effective strengthening of the embargo." The OAS has promised support. Concerning U.S. "statements of support for democracy," Aristide says it is "very nice," but would like the "communiques to become actions." He believes "a naval blockade will eventually become necessary to oust the regime that overthrew him."

Port-au-Prince radio reports that the Bazin government is "already facing diplomatic isolation" and that international reaction to his appointment has been "far from favorable." Port-au-Prince radio also reports that the Senate ratified Bazin as prime minister and Bazin said "his government intends to resume negotiations to find a final solution to the Haitian crisis as stipulated in the text of the tripartite agreement."

Inter-American

Managua radio carries live Nicaraguan President Chamorro's opening speech at the 12th Central American presidential summit in Managua. Chamorro says the summit is "firmly on the path toward peace," but also to be discussed is economic growth. Central America is "in the process of consolidating" economic integration. In particular the region is striving for free trade, the harmonization of tariff policies and commerce instruments, and is negotiating "within the framework of the Enterprise for the America's Initiative." Chamorro believes the value of the summit is that it will serve as "a basic instrument for publicizing the development of Central America in this decade." She warns, "The path that we must now travel is arduous and filled with problems and difficulties." Thus, "now more than ever we need the support of the international community to consolidate the advances and improve our peoples' standards of living." Chamorro says, "We want a summit to look into the future and be a legacy for our generations as a message of accomplishment and strength toward the future."

Managua radio interviews Guatemalan President Serrano on his arrival in Managua. He says, "one of the main purposes of this summit is to assess Central American integration." The region should attain "greater levels of independence. We should all join forces, help each other, and not necessarily wait for our solutions to come from abroad." Addressing the EC's imposition of quotas on bananas and coffee, Serrano said, "We reject the discriminatory measures" and will fight them "because far from opening the markets and favoring the world's underdeveloped nations, the measures are imposing restrictions on us that are totally illogical." Guatemala is "willing to cooperate" with Central America "and now is the time to reach conclusions, take action, and implement our decisions."

Central American Presidential Summit Begins

Ministers on Nicaraguan Aid

PA0506024092 Managua BARRICADA in Spanish 4 Jun 92 pp 1, 6

[Report by Maria Alicia Talavera]

[Text] A few hours before the 12th Central American Presidential Summit started, the region's economy ministers expressed their disagreement with the "existing conditions" on foreign cooperation and, especially, on the financial aid Nicaragua needs.

In a public statement, the Central American foreign and economy ministers expressed their concern for "the prevailing practice of placing conditions on international cooperation and trade in the region, which is facing the pressing need to advance its economic and social development processes."

The ministers added that the suspension of disbursements "endangered the advances Nicaragua has made with great effort and regional undertakings to boost the peace process, development, integration, and democracy."

On the curtailment of the $100 million to Nicaragua, the regional officials asserted: "It seems most inconvenient. Nicaragua needs international aid to consolidate its political situation. We call on the presidents to request that the aid be approved, as the Nicaraguan people deserve it."

Panamanian Foreign Minister Julio E. Linares emphasized that past decisions will be evaluated at this summit. He said that more important than making statements, however good they may be, is that recommendations be implemented. "All recommendations have been implemented and the objective of this summit is to evaluate their implementation," Linares stated.

Strict security measures are implemented at the Camino Real Hotel. Only people with official credentials to attend the 12th Central American Presidential Summit may enter the hotel. Although the summit did not start until 4 June, on 3 June the hotel's parking lot was full of vehicles, which indicates there will be a serious parking problem during the summit.

Serrano Interviewed

PA0506013892 Managua Radio Nicaragua Network in Spanish 1703 GMT 4 Jun 92

[Interview with Guatemalan President Jorge Serrano by unidentified reporters upon his arrival at the 12th Central American Presidential Summit in Managua—live]

[Text] [Serrano] In my opinion, one of the main purposes of this summit is to assess Central American integration. The former and current Central American presidents have signed a number of agreements, which we must now proceed to implement.

[Reporter] Will Central American integration be endangered if the U.S. Government suspends its aid to Nicaragua? What is your opinion?

[Serrano] You all know that Guatemala has maintained a very particular position regarding foreign aid. We have been able to solve our problems without foreign aid. We believe Central American integration should be guided to obtain greater levels of independence. We should all join forces, help each other, and not necessarily wait for our solutions to come from abroad. This is why the Central American presidents have assembled, to find—autonomously and with dignity—the solutions to our problems. I do not think foreign aid can be the determining factor for a sovereign, clear, and categoric decision to unite the Central American people. This decision does not depend on any external factor, but rather on the will of its leaders and, above all, on the people's mandate each of us has received.

[Reporter] What about the EC's decision on the imposition of quotas on bananas and coffee?

[Serrano] We have taken a clear and straightforward stance on this issue; we reject these discriminatory measures. These measures are against the GATT, the Uruguay Round, and against so many other international agreements in which we have participated. Central America has set an example by opening its borders, by establishing free trade mechanisms and, therefore, we feel this is discrimination. We are going to expose that action and fight it because far from opening the markets and favoring the world's underdeveloped nations, these measures are imposing restrictions on us that are totally illogical. I believe this is the reason we are getting together. The big advantage we have in Central America is that there are five presidents... [pauses] six presidents who get along very well, we understand the responsibility we have to our people and we are willing to compete for markets in a dignified manner. I also want to say that we must accept that the world has changed, there are new blocs in the world. Before, for example, we used to sell Guatemalan bananas directly to Germany. Currently, the conditions in the European market have changed, other nations' could have an effect on our relations. We must learn to live with these changes and fight with dignity for the principle that both they, and we, uphold: the principle of freedom for America.

[Reporter] What do you have to say about the human rights situation in Guatemala?

[Serrano] As you well know, my country has been experiencing an armed confrontation for over 30 years. Although the problem has been confined to specific areas and to specific circumstances, it still affects us. The human rights situation has significantly improved. I can tell you with my head raised high that since I took office not one case... [pauses] there are no cases of human rights violations that have been drawn to the executive's attention that have not been immediately remitted to the courts of justice. At this time, human rights violations

have ceased and are considered a criminal act, subject to the law. In these cases, people are being investigated, people have been sentenced, and others have an arrest warrant issued against them.

[Reporter] Mr. President, what are the results of President Menem's recent visit to your country?

[Serrano] We were quite pleased with President Menem's visit. This is an effort exerted by our two countries to strengthen ties. This is the first time an Argentine president visited Guatemala on an official basis. We were able to ascertain President Menem's firm determination to strengthen ties with the Guatemalan people and the Central American people. We reviewed a series of ambitious plans that will allow us to improve our trade, relations, and technical cooperation programs, and render our communications more explicit and smooth. As you well know, the technological leap, let us call it that, between Argentina and Guatemala—and Central America in general—is big, but not as big as with the rest of the world. This means that whatever we manage to achieve with Argentina will be positive for all Central America because I personally think we will obtain the appropriate technology.

[Reporter] Mr. President, we welcome you to our country and we would like you to talk about the specific issues Guatemala will discuss at the 12th Central American summit.

[Serrano] First of all, I want to tell the Nicaraguan people I love them very much. I feel happy to be here. May God bless you and help us find solutions to our problems. Guatemala comes, as usual, with an open mind and willing to cooperate with the Central American region so we may adopt practical decisions and actions to solve our problems. I believe many statements have been made and many decisions have been adopted in other summits, and this is the time to reach conclusions, take action, and implement our decisions.

[Reporter] Mr. President....

[Serrano, interrupting] I thank you....

[Reporter, interrupting] Can you comment on the disarmament sponsored by Honduras?

[Reporter] To what point is Guatemala complying with it?

[Reporter] Honduras is requesting a disarmament. What is Guatemala's position on this?

[Serrano] We believe this should be carried out, like it was discussed, within the framework of a commission which the governments have comprised to find a military balance in the region. Thank you.

Chamorro Opens Summit

PA0406222492 Managua Radio Nicaragua Network in Spanish 1841 GMT 4 Jun 92

[Speech by Nicaraguan President Violeta Chamorro at the opening of the 12th Central American presidential summit at the Olof Palme Convention Center in Managua—live]

[Text] Your Excellency Costa Rican President Rafael Angel Calderon Fournier and Mrs. Gloria Bejarano de Calderon; Your Excellency Salvadoran President Alfredo Cristiani Burkard and Mrs. Margarita de Cristiani; Your Excellency Guatemalan President Jorge Serrano Elias and Mrs. Magda Bianchi de Serrano; Your Excellency Honduran President Rafael Leonardo Callejas Romero and Mrs. Norma de Callejas; Your Excellency Panamanian President Guillermo Endara Galimany and his wife, who was unable to attend; Your Excellency Argentine President Carlos Saul Menem, a special guest; Your Excellency Belizean Prime Minister George Price; Your Excellency Frederick Chien, foreign minister of the Republic of China; Your Eminence Cardinal Miguel Obando y Bravo; Messrs. members of the government branches; Mr. Vice President of Nicaragua; Mr. Daniel Ortega, former Nicaraguan president; Messrs. members of the participating delegations; Messrs. members of the diplomatic corps; special guests and observers; ladies and gentlemen; journalists:

On behalf of the Nicaraguan people and government, I want to thank you and extend to you the most cordial welcome. I also want to express our sincere satisfaction with the holding in Managua of this summit devoted to the analysis of commitments, achievements, and expectations stemming from the 11 summits that have been held to date.

The fact that this summit is being held in my country is cause for satisfaction, because Nicaragua represents the first great achievement of this peace process that is leading Central America down the path of freedom and democracy. When the process began in May 1986, the Nicaraguans were experiencing a civil war. The doors were closed to peaceful coexistence, sincere dialogue, and understanding among brothers. The Central American presidential summits erased that harsh reality, and free elections were held in Nicaragua on 25 February 1990. That led to victory for the National Opposition Union. More than 22,000 Nicaraguans turned over their weapons, and the Army was reduced from 86,000 men to its current 20,000. Since I took office, I have acted with the conviction that Nicaraguans had the opportunity to forever reconcile our divided society and end the confrontations in the history of our country. For the first time in Nicaragua's history, we are building a national project based on democratic ideals, a state of law, social justice, respect for public freedoms, and national reconciliation. I had the objective of forming a government for all Nicaraguans, without discrimination, because my only party is the blue and white flag of my homeland. I

decided to exercise my functions as president of all Nicaraguans, regardless of their ideology or social status. In this way, we are laying the foundations for an authentic national reconciliation, and we are learning to live in peace and democracy.

In this sense, the presidential summits have been and are valuable contributions to the achievement of peace, democracy, and reconciliation in Nicaragua. The presidential summits have also contributed greatly to the achievement of peace and reconciliation in other Central American countries. The historic Chapultepec agreements have opened the way for the consolidation of peace and reconciliation in the sister republic of El Salvador. Meanwhile, our Guatemalan brothers continue negotiations to find a peaceful solution to their domestic situation. Without a doubt, today's Central American summit is firmly on the path toward peace; the historic fruit of the Central American people's determination and the presidential agreements.

Dear Presidents, in the Puntarenas Declaration, we declared Central America a region of peace, freedom, democracy, and development. We said that peace is comprehensive and interconnected. We stated that it is clear that democracy must be based on development.

That is why regional peace could not be the only topic discussed at the presidential summit. We also needed to include economic growth in the discussions.

The first summit in which I directly participated as president of my country was held in Antigua, Guatemala in June 1990. We discussed this issue in depth and agreed on a plan of action that defined a new strategy for regional development. That plan gave priority to our own integration process and the incorporation of the economies in the international market.

Now we can say we are in the process of consolidating our economic integration. We are moving towards free trade in Central America, and Panama is gradually being incorporated. We are trying to harmonize our tariff policies and commerce instruments. In addition, we have begun important negotiations within the framework of the Enterprise for the America's Initiative. We negotiated free trade zones and open market mechanisms with Mexico, Venezuela, and Chile, and we are holding negotiations with Colombia and the Group of Three.

Central Americans now have a partnership for democracy and development of the region. Each year we renew our dialogue with the European communities, and we have launched a process to improve ties with Caricom [Caribbean Common Market] and the Republic of China.

We have in attendance at this summit my good friend Argentine President Carlos Saul Menem and representatives of member countries of the Rio Group, in which Central America is an active participant.

My president friends, years ago our Central America did not speak with a single voice as it does now. That is why my first message at the beginning of this summit in Managua highlights the value of presidential summits as a basic instrument for publicizing the development of Central America in this decade.

The end of the war and the effort in the areas of commerce and integration are not enough. Central America also needed a summit to discuss social issues. That was the focus of our last meeting in Tegucigalpa last December; to affirm a commitment to the human development of our region, placing special importance on children, women, and youths, which are the pillars of our future.

The agreements of the previous summits gave Central Americans the ability to decide their own future. There were few times since our independence that we had seen such a profound, authentic, and determined manifestation that only a united Central America could move forward. While in Eastern Europe the old myths and walls crumbled, in Central America we found ourselves. Once again we began to look inside ourselves and, renewed by our historical perspective, we could see the light of identity and common origin that leads us to be part of one single future. That light is now shining stronger in view of the challenges posed by international competition, our technological backwardness, widespread poverty, and the emergence of large blocs of nations.

When I point to the accomplishments of this new Central America, I am not trying to give the impression that we have reached our objectives. We have simply culminated one period. The path that we must now travel is arduous and filled with problems and difficulties.

Now more than ever we need the support of the international community to consolidate these advancements and improve our peoples' standards of living. Consequently, this summit is devoted to making a stop along the way. However, I must firmly stress that if we look back, it is only to have a clearer view of our future. We do not want a summit to discuss only our successes or our commitments. We want a summit to look into the future and be a legacy for our generations as a message of accomplishment and strength toward the future.

My president friends, I formally open the 12th summit of Central American presidents and express the hope that a renovated agenda will result from this fraternal presidential meeting, which we gladly and proudly celebrate today in Managua. This agenda will reaffirm our faith in God, peace, democracy, and development of a Central America that, thanks to the effort and sacrifices of its peoples, deserves the best future. Thank you very much. [applause]

Cuba

Castro Addresses Teachers Conference 30 May

FL0406122392 Havana Radio and Television Networks in Spanish 0133 GMT 2 Jun 92

[Speech by Cuban President Fidel Castro at the close of the conference of the Manuel Ascunce Domenech Teaching Contingent in Havana on 30 May—recorded]

[Text] Comrades of the glorious and distinguished first Manuel Ascunce Domenech Contingent: Well, as was said here, the idea of holding this meeting came up during the Union of Young Communists [UJC] Congress, when we met during a recess with a group of comrades from the first contingent who had come to the congress. They had been invited by [UJC First Secretary] Robertico [Robaina]. It was a relatively large, enthusiastic group of comrades, and I spoke with them for a while. They recalled that they were going to celebrate their 20th anniversary, and they talked about holding a meeting. Therefore, we immediately decided to organize the meeting as soon as possible.

We still had to set a date, and several weeks later the date was set. It was on the 28th, right? Yes, the 28th. Later, other obligations came up that were unavoidable. We had to hold a meeting of the Cuban Communist Party [PCC] Politburo this month and in looking for a date, I am not sure that we remembered that the date for the contingent's meeting had been decided, between one day and the next with all our obligations. Well, we decided to hold the PCC Politburo meeting on 27 and 28 May. But that was not so serious because there was still the opportunity to meet with you, if not on 28 May then on 29 May. But something else happened: a fairly strong earthquake in the eastern provinces. So, there was nothing else to do, because in between the 27 and 28 May meeting with the comrades, and your meeting on 29 May, the earthquake in the eastern provinces happened.

We considered it a moral duty to visit the area, to find out what the situation was. Of course, the PCC and government and everybody were working, but more than anything it was a moral issue, a moral obligation, in a spirit of solidarity with those towns that had suffered damages. Those who had not suffered damages were feeling anxious, naturally, as a result of that strong phenomenon, which produced a number of injuries. Fortunately there were no fatalities, and no one was disabled. There were some broken bones, mostly of people who did things they should not have. Some people suffered injuries not because of buildings collapsing but because they jumped out of windows from the second floor. Some young students jumped out of windows on the second floor, and one person jumped off the third floor and nothing happened to him. Some people are made of rubber, I guess. Others were running and fell. It looks like the earthquake had quite an impact on the people.

We also wanted to know, since the specialists were still worried, how the repetition of the many quakes were being interpreted, those that were not being felt but only recorded with equipment. A high number was being detected every day, more than 600 in four days. The specialists were concerned. Therefore, we wanted to share their impressions. These kinds of phenomena cannot be predicted, but measures can be taken. The people can be instructed about what they should or should not do in these cases. I am speaking about the injuries, because there were fractures as a result of things that should not have been done. We really wanted to know what the dangers could be at that time.

I must say that all the buildings built with earthquake prevention measures were effective. Even the Pilon Hospital which was finished just a few years ago and was built with earthquake prevention measures, earthquake protection, with a construction system designed to resist such a natural phenomenon, is perfectly all right. The structure did not suffer any damage, although some false ceilings, which are not important, were damaged. Also, what appears to be cracks appeared between the columns and the walls. But that is the way the building was built; that is why it has safety valves, so that when there was an earthquake, they would open and it would protect the building. Later, the cracks would be filled in, but of course that frightened the personnel, the hospital directors, the comrades, and they decided—correctly, if they thought there was danger—to evacuate the patients. But after the specialists visited, they saw that it was just the opposite. Everything had functioned perfectly.

I should say that, for example, of the more than 400 houses which were built as a result of flooding which occurred several years ago in Media Luna, not one was damaged. The buildings that were made as those were, as they should have been, were not damaged. The main damages were to older houses or privately built houses, but even the privately built houses that were built according to the technical standards—not anti-earthquake techniques, but according to construction standards—practically did not suffer any damages. The ones that suffered damages were those that had violated construction standards.

Now, it was strong. It felt particularly strong because it appears that the impact of an earthquake of this type, or the effects that are felt, depend on the depth of the quake. In 1976 there was an earthquake of more or less the same intensity, but at a depth of 10 km. It did not reach very far. The quake had a depth of 30 km, where the epicenter was. In these cases, according to the specialists, the effects are much more extensive, they have a wider impact. Of course, there was a girl who was in a mango tree during the earthquake, and she suffered a fracture.

But I should mention something else. The Cabo Cruz lighthouse has a container with mercury, as part of the light, with several dozen pounds of mercury, and as a result of the movement the container was completely

emptied, as if a glass had been turned halfway over. If you turned a glass at a 45 degree angle, it is possible that it would not be emptied out. Not that the lighthouse was tipped to a 45 degree angle, but it appears that the vibrations were such that the mercury in the container spilled out. Some cracking also occurred to the lighthouse because it was built in 1871, according to what I understand.

But the girl who was in the mango tree fell out, and the mercury that was in the light was spilled, and of course the people lived through all these tremors and they got a shock. But in general the people's behavior was excellent. The people in all those areas are very organized. All the people's government groups functioned, and the civil defense command posts, which had been organized beforehand. Many people knew what they had to do, get under a beam or go outside. In general, the population in the areas most affected was very calm. They acted excellently, calmly.

But I was saying that there was a moral obligation to make this trip because well, what could we do? I did not want to delay this meeting any longer. The idea of asking you to stay one more day occurred to me, as the only solution to the problem. I had to carry out a very intense schedule there, but in any case I wanted to participate in this event. It was not necessary for me to be present for all the discussions, because those who needed to be here were present. Everything you said has been noted.

My obligation to you was also moral. Well, part of it was sentimental too, to be here with you. [applause] I was very interested in this meeting, especially in the results of this meeting, which as Gomez [not further identified] said, really became a kind of congress. That is what we wanted, for the meeting to become a kind of congress. I must say before I say any more that I was really very moved when I entered this auditorium and I saw you. I did not know you had the tee shirts, those green and black tee shirts. They look good on you. [laughter] But I was really moved.

The past 20 years flashed through my mind, the time when the contingent was organized, and it seemed unreal, unbelievable, that after 20 years we would have this plenum, full of members from the first contingent. It is unreal, something unbelievable, a kind of dream. Especially when one knows that a very high percentage stayed in the contingent, stayed in education as teachers, a very high percentage. I think the figure is around here somewhere.

Of course, some were taken away. The PCC took some people. There is always... [pauses] Wherever there is quality, people seek quality. But I think some of those comrades were also here. It is not that they were disloyal, but they were called to other tasks. The case of a female comrade who is a people's council president was discussed here. They took her. From the council, right? It is a male comrade, right? Yes, I have seen him. When they are going to take them for the councils, they are going to take [words indistinct]. I know some scientists who were made council presidents, and I have complained, I have not stopped complaining. I say: They can find someone else to do those tasks.

The number is high. I think there were 907 who graduated, and 787 have been present. The number is very high although among those present, there are some who are no longer in education, but not many. The number of those who are doing other things is also high. There are a number who are university professors. There are others, 184 I think, who are professors at teachers colleges. They are everywhere.

We have Robertico in the PCC Politburo, so you can see, that gives you an idea of what has happened. But one cannot say that the contingent [words indistinct] but to see you all together like this after 20 years, with the spirit that you contribute, your enthusiasm, your conviction, your loyalty to education, the country, and the revolution, is impressive. So, it is not strange that all of us have experienced the emotions of this meeting.

I have tried to be informed since that same day, on the afternoon of 28 May, Robertico explained to us... [pauses] When the sessions ended we were meeting, and we asked him to tell us a little about how the commission meetings had gone, what was discussed. Also when I arrived, Comrade [Carlos] Lage sent me some summaries of the topics that had been discussed in the commissions, the main topics and also some of the aspects of the meeting. Since they had more time they were able discuss more. They told me also that there was a meeting about anecdotes and things that had happened to you. It was today at 1430. Therefore, I have received a lot of condensed information, because many things have been discussed, about the event.

I think Gomez spoke a lot about many of these things. I do not have to repeat them. Neither do I want to speak extemporaneously on each one of these topics, which I think should be the subject of reflection and meditation. They were the topics which you raised, the ideas you suggested. The meetings were very worthwhile and of enormous interest, everything you have said here, because we started from the premise that it would be hard for anyone else to know more than you about educational problems. This is the premise I began with. After 20 years working in education, remaining at your posts during these 20 years, doing the mission which the country had assigned you, doing the tasks to which you were called, the reason your cooperation was requested, it would be unlikely that any other group would have more data and more direct information than you had, that any group could help us more than you have done in our noble effort, our necessary effort, to improve education, and the quality of education.

That is why I was not at all surprised at the content of your discussions, all the ideas you wanted to debate, all the suggestions you made, full of meaning and wisdom. Of course, the most important thing is the time that this

meeting is taking place, and the possibility that all these ideas will be analyzed quickly—we cannot leave it for sometime in the future—that they will be analyzed and evaluated, implemented, everything that can be implemented; or to explain what can or cannot be implemented and why, the results of this whole exchange. Because there is a very open attitude, an attitude of complete openness in the PCC, the government, and the Ministry [of Education], to listen to ideas and views, to discuss and gather all these factors which will allow us to reach the goals that we should set.

There was no better time to hold this meeting. It is impossible to forget how the contingent was formed during that UJC congress. They were facing an unsolvable problem. There was a great explosion of secondary school students, and there were no teachers. How could the problem be solved? There were millions, and not only those who had been born before, but those large numbers that had been born after the revolution, in the famous demographic explosion years.

They all went to elementary school. We built many elementary schools. We employed as teachers a large number of citizens who had not studied to be teachers, or we chose students to teach elementary school. We trained them during that beginning period. There was a time when 70 percent of the elementary school teachers were not university graduates. If the number of our elementary school teachers was low, the number of secondary school teachers was even lower, a lot lower. If it is feasible to train some people as elementary school teachers, although to be an elementary school teacher is very serious and important, it was much less feasible to train teachers for the secondary schools.

That whole enormous number suddenly entered the secondary schools. At that time we were building lots of schools. Hundreds of such schools were built in the cities, in the countryside. Hundreds of such schools were built in the cities, and where were we going to get the teachers? Where? How were we going to solve this problem? Our whole educational process threatened to come to a halt. All our educational progress threatened to come to a halt. The idea that came up was this: to call on the (?10th grade) students and form the contingent and apply the work/study principle. So they studied during the afternoon or at night, and they taught classes. They were young, capable, revolutionary people. That was the foundation of the formation of the contingent and the reason why it was created.

Well, Comrade Maria de los Angeles [Garcia] said that many did not have the vocation to be teachers, and that is the truth. Many wanted to do other things, and they thought that in their lives they would study other things, follow other roads. Nevertheless, they did it anyway as a revolutionary duty, because the country needed it. I am very happy to hear you say that you have never regretted making that decision, that you are happy to have fulfilled that role.

I know that many cadres of the Federation of Secondary School Students [FEEM], and the student organizations, and many of their leaders saw it as a duty, and they joined the contingent. They forgot about—what do you call them?—vocations.

There are indeed times when vocations must be forgotten about. Vocations must be forgotten about at many times in life, so as to attend to duty. Because a vocation means one likes this or that, but if each person does only what he likes, what are the chances of this coinciding with the country's needs or with the problems the country is facing? However, you stepped forward without hesitation and joined this group. Thus, I know about the individual quality of each person that joined, in spite of the fact that there were some, as the comrade from Pinar del Rio said, who did want to study, who did want to be career teachers. But many... [pauses] And they did become teachers. They did become teachers. I was delighted with Mariano's [not further identified] class here. Since I [words indistinct] to know whether or not he thought, back then, of being a teacher. He was not planning to be a teacher, yet look at him now. He is a good teacher. He gave us a class. What was that class called [word indistinct]? [Unidentified speakers: Master class.] He gave a master class, here, to all of us. He taught me a lot. It really turned out to be very enjoyable. Well, this shows how someone who never planned to be a teacher can develop into a great teacher. What counts, basically, is the will.

Life has assigned a task to each and every one of us, and we have had to fulfill that task. That is what happened with you people. However, the pool of talent was excellent. That is why we felt that the ideas that you might express would be enormously valuable.

I was reflecting upon what we need to do in the future. I did not have time to ask Robertico's opinion regarding the rest of the contingents. I felt that we should have a meeting every year, I mean, each time a contingent reaches its 20th anniversary. However, thinking about the special period... [pauses] I do not even know how many more there are, nor (?how many years have passed). I said to myself: Well, the most ambitious thing would be to have a discussion with all of them as they complete their 20th year. I think that we must do something with each and every one of the contingents when they reach their 20th anniversary. Something must be done. But with at least the first three, something special must be done, like what has been done with you. I think we could think about doing the same thing next year with the second contingent, and at least for the third contingent, too. You understand that we cannot commit to... [interrupted by applause]

If not a congress, Robertico—calculating how many there are, because many contingents were formed, how many are in education—what can we do? If not at the national level, at least at the provincial level, we can hold some kind of event to commemorate the 20th anniversary. But we should do that at the national level with the

first three, as we have already done with this one. We should repeat this, (?after more time has passed) [words indistinct] and once again gather... [pauses] Because the others must also have accumulated a lot of experience. We can analyze with them whatever new things we will be doing, the new measures that the Ministry of Education will be implementing. We can ask their opinion of these things.

I have thought of something else. In the same way that you see some Bay of Pigs battalion or another meeting... [pauses] I see it all the time, in the newspaper: Meeting of Bay of Pigs Battalion 402, for example. They meet.

Of course, teaching is different from war, because in war, the more time passes, the less warrior-like the old warriors are. [laughter] They have lost strength, lost energy, over the years. But in education, the more time passes, the more the teachers know. They accumulate more experience, since theirs is not physical labor but mental labor. Theirs is an accumulation of mental energy and experience after spending 20 or 30 years in that field. I do not know why someone wanted to... [pauses] Who was it who wanted to make you retire? [laughter] Ah, yes, it was Mariano who wanted to make you all retire.

I was looking, even your ages appear there: X number of 35-year- olds, X number of 36-year-olds, X number of 37-year-olds, X number of 38-year-olds, and very, very few who are older than 38. So, in 10 more years, you will be forty-something; and in 20 more years, fifty-something. Are you going to retire? Who has spoken here of retiring? [laughter] Would those with the most experience, the best, retire? Actually, you really are already thinking about retiring, some of you... [pauses] Especially given the life prospects that are opening up, the prolongation of life expectancy, the development of our medical sciences, and new methods for prolonging life. Or is it that we do not believe in our medicine, in the progress of our science?

I also think this: I know many teachers who have been teaching for many years. They do not retire. The same goes for many doctors. The hardest thing in the world is to find a doctor who wants to retire. In general, their experience too is an experience of the mind.

At 70, 75, and 80 years of age, they are still practicing medicine. They serve as teachers, and at the last, they serve as consultants, for a university chair or a university school. So you are young. Look at the same thing with yourselves. You have spent 20 years in the teaching profession and you are less than 40 years old. That gives an idea of the youth of our teachers, because there are at least 14 contingents behind you. I asked Robertico up to when the contingents were formed. There were 18 contingents.

The number of students that, according to Mariano's calculations, passed through your hands was discussed here. Mariano said some 3,500. Of course, there were 907 of you. Later there were fewer. Later there were 800. Perhaps not everyone had 3,500 students. That does not mean 3,500 different students. Some of them may have been students first of one of you and then of another. That does not mean that physically there were 3,500 students for each one of you. But if not 3 million, which is what a mathematical calculation would give, if you multiplied more or less 800 by 3,500... [pauses] That comes to approximately 2,800 or 2,900. I think that at least 2 million different people must have... [pauses] even if you cut all those calculations by one third, at least 2 million different students must have been students of yours. If you cut that by half, to at least 1.5 million, that is a quite respectable figure.

What we should ask is not what the total number of students who passed through your classes is, but rather how many of the 42,000 physicians that we have—or of the 46,000 we are going to have by this summer—have passed through your classes. How many of the hundreds of thousands of engineers and professionals and mid-level technicians that Cuba has, how many of these, passed through your classes? How many of the tens of thousands of scientists passed through your classes? At least through the classes of this first contingent? Those who were in the seventh grade back then graduated from university eight years later. Thus, it is possible that scientists who got their degrees 12 years ago were students of yours, out of all these scientists working in the different scientific fields that are being given accelerated development in our country. That is the important thing: the number of people that have passed through.

I reiterate what I said at the youth congress: I think our youth is the best in the world. That does not mean that we are content with, complacent about, what we have. But, I am comparing our young people with the young people of other countries, and ours look better to me, despite all our deficiencies and defects. Because the same work/study system... [pauses] Everyone here under 40 years of age has done manual labor. Despite that, education's momentum was so great that, let us say, we ran, we have run, a certain amount of risk. In a way, we have also seen a big exodus from physical activities to intellectual activities. When we talked about universalizing labor, it was because we were also universalizing education. A society cannot be composed only of intellectuals. Such a thing cannot exist. It is terrible that physical work, manual labor, should be looked upon with disdain. It is terrible. One can see it, the great exodus that occurred from the countryside to the cities. Not only from the countryside to the cities but from certain jobs to other jobs. We have been able to solve many of these problems, such as harvesting sugarcane using machines. It has helped a lot. We went from 350,000 manual canecutters to fewer than 60,000. So the machines and those kinds of equipment helped, but despite that, just look at how many people we are having to mobilize despite the number of students who are in work-study schools.

So, we can also see the other side of the matter. When universal opportunity arose, opportunity for all, there was a very great exodus from certain kinds of activities

toward other, very important activities. However, not everyone can work at those kinds of activities. Part of the society has to work at manual labor. That is why it is so important to give manual labor its proper value. That is why it is important to increase the social status of manual labor. That is extremely important. That is, without it, there can be no production, services, or anything. What kind of respect should be given to all those compatriots who do that kind of work, that very hard work? Some of the work is very hard, and some of it has very little social status. In the education we should give our young people, we must teach them first and foremost to respect and admire the man who works with his hands.

That is essential. But, I say that despite that, everyone under 40 years of age here has, at one time or another, done manual labor. No other youth in the world has been brought up that way. That is why our people respond to mobilizations, they respond to everything, and they harbor these sentiments.

Our people fear nothing. If they must build, they build. If they must till the soil, they do it. If they have to grab a hoe and chop weeds, or pull spring onions, or whatever, well, who has not? I think even you did that, just the other day. You did some work of that sort this very morning. They wanted to take you out there [words indistinct] I recommended to Robertico that they not take you so far away, because it was going to take too much travel time, if you went all the way out there to El Paraiso. There were a lot of you, and a closer spot had to be sought so that the voluntary work could be done. However, I think it has had a great influence on our youth and on our people and their sentiments, and in that sense of valuing manual labor.

That comes up in all kinds of things. They were telling me yesterday about the incident that occurred a few days ago involving a Haitian boat, a boat of Haitian emigrants, fleeing Haitians, that a few days ago near Pilon, at dawn, on 23 May I think, two days before this earthquake... [pauses] They had been adrift for about seven days. Suddenly someone realized that a boat had run aground, was shipwrecked there.

The Haitian boat was lucky enough, in a place where there are kilometers and kilometers of cliffs, to go and wash up on a little stretch of the coast where there is sand. If they had hit the cliffs—because there were some 30 people on that boat—those people would have perished. There would have been no possible salvation. But, there was a little stretch of sand (?and they were saved). Two children drowned, unfortunately. It was at night; it did not happen in daytime. They suddenly ran into the sand. Some people saw some movement, heard some noise, and I do not know what they must have thought was happening, but the residents all mobilized immediately.

They have a little word they use to indicate that they are going into action. I think they say they "activate themselves." So, they immediately "activated themselves." [laughter] With machetes, sticks, anything they could get their hands on, for they did not know what was going on. It could have been an invasion, for all they knew. So, they mobilized. They found out what it was. They immediately began helping the Haitians. They ran and notified the hospital. They took with them an already dehydrated child, whose life was thus saved, miraculously. They got him to the hospital in time, and the Pilon Hospital saved his life.

They immediately took the Haitians to different places. They took whatever measures needed to be taken. They obtained milk for the children. They got food for the Haitians, and so forth, with a uprightness of spirit that is truly impressive. Such are the internationalist sentiments of our youth, of our people in general. There are many values that have, in one way or another, been educated into our people: that feeling of solidarity, well, a sense of duty, organization, and discipline. That is why, regardless of all the deficiencies, the revolution has been able to forge a youth such as Cuba now has. But of course, we are far from having attained perfection, and it is our duty to aspire to far more and to obtain a human being that is better, much better, in every way. Because is there anyone who can place limits on the perfecting of humankind? Can anyone put a limit on Man's virtues, and say: This is as far as we want to go? I think the limits are infinite, as regards improving human beings.

Human beings are sorely in need of that, too, because one sees almost everywhere in the world manifestations of a terrible selfishness that is very widespread. It is terrible. There is national selfishnesses, personal selfishnesses. Capitalist society itself alienates men, divides them, turns them into wild beasts, into wolves. The very system turns men into wolves. Our system does not create wolves. If that were not true, our small nation would not have been able to have, at a given moment, more than 50,000 men in Angola, at critical, decisive moments.

Hundreds of thousands of our compatriots would not have spent their days fulfilling internationalist missions. If our society created wolves, 30,000 teachers would not have volunteered to go teach in Nicaragua. Nor would 100,000 have volunteered when a number of Cuban teachers were murdered there, in Nicaragua.

A society of wolves does not produce that kind of human being, an internationalist willing to risk his life, a teacher willing to go... [pauses] Right here we were talking about several comrades, when I asked Robertico, and he told me that six comrades from that contingent lost their lives in internationalist missions. A society that nurtures wolves does not mobilize the tens of thousands of professionals, teachers, doctors, professors, and workers who have mobilized on behalf of our nation. Go to any capitalist nation and ask for volunteers to go to the Nicaraguan mountains to teach, there where sometimes they have to ride a mule for three days, and live there with the peasants, with large peasant families, who might have a cow, or a maybe a horse. And they all live

together. Some incredible pages of history have been written. Only a society such as ours can create such a person. A capitalist society does not create, does not produce such people.

I have told several visitors that if they had asked for the 2,000 teachers which we sent, and had searched throughout every country in this hemisphere, it is unlikely that they would have been able to gather 2,000 volunteer teachers. Here, 30,000 volunteered. That cannot be achieved with any amount of money. No one does it for money. Likewise, for money, no one would risk his life, leave his family, or run the risk of dying in a distant land. I am certain that our country had enough virtues to mobilize more people than all the countries of the hemisphere, including the United States.

If the United States had asked its teachers—and its population is approximately 20 times that of Cuba—they would not be able to gather half of number of volunteers which we could, volunteers willing to endure the living conditions of those remote places as our teachers did. Only a revolutionary and socialist system such as ours is able to develop these virtues among the people.

But where is the limit? We still have selfish people. We still have people who are not patriotic, people who do not feel the ideas of internationalism. We still have so many people... [pauses] There are still even lumpen in our society, or selfish people. Such people still exist. Where is the limit to our work in education? Where is the limit to our efforts to seek perfection? That is why I say that we have the best youth in the world, but we have to struggle very hard so that in 10, 20, or 30 years we have a youth that is twice as good, people that are twice as good, twice as virtuous.

History shows us that yes, it is possible, and people are capable of great merit, great virtues. Mankind has great potential for this. Mankind is capable of doing so much. That is what makes us human. That is, simply, what distinguishes us from other animal species. That is the fabulous virtue of mankind: its capacity to give its all, to give its life, to give everything for something, for an idea, for a cause, for a noble feeling, for a spirit of solidarity.

That is not only part of our contemporary history. If Cuban history is studied thoroughly, you would see what extraordinary virtues our people had in the previous century in their fight for independence, what sacrifices the Cuban people were capable of, at specific times in their history. These virtues have deep roots; they were not created solely by the revolution. These roots were created by our history. These virtues were what made possible the uprising, the overthrow of the tyranny, and the beginning of the revolution. These virtues were what made it possible to start on the road toward the first free territory of America.

Of course, the revolution multiplied these virtues. That is what the revolution has done. Yes, negative trends have also developed; we have to be fully aware of such phenomena and of how to fight them. But I would not need more proof than yourselves to demonstrate what mankind is capable of, because of what I mentioned before: the number of people which comprised this contingent, why they joined, how they joined, and what you are today after 20 years. You were also educated by the revolution, motivated by the revolution. The revolution showed you the way, established your duties, made you what you are today. Can we not turn the rest into what you are today? Can we not turn millions of people into what you are today? All of this, without any additional argument, proves the importance of education, the importance of what you have discussed, the importance of what you have proposed here.

This shows how, now more than ever, it is in our hands to do it, even during this difficult period. We will not be able to build new schools for a few years. But how much can we do with man, with human beings? How much can our education improve with what we have? The potential is immense, yes, in the special period, particularly during the special period, because this period allows many of the virtues of the people to bloom, because in difficult times the people grow, and multiply, and give the best of themselves.

This is what those people whom I visited, the ones who withstood the earthquake, give: their courage, steadfastness, trust, and the noble act of helping the shipwreck victims. In difficult times everyone works harder; in difficult times more people mobilize; in difficult times there is even more patriotism. Here we have a sector and an excellent example of what can be accomplished in a special period with whatever resources we have. But on the basis of a resource which is not hard currency or oil: men and women, human beings, human material. With such human material, how much can we not accomplish?

It was mentioned here that the circumstances are different, and that is true. Now, we do not have a student explosion; what we have is an explosion of teachers and professors. Yes, an explosion, but not in the negative sense of the word. In other words, we have a great availability of teachers and professors. That is why we started steps toward establishing the sabbatical year to allow the teachers to study. That is why we have been able to allow many primary school teachers to study at the university. That is why now they do not enter the school for primary school teachers after completing six years of school, but after completing secondary school. They may have different levels of training, but they are much more highly trained than they were after they had completed only six years. Now, they do not study at a school for primary school teachers; rather they study at the university for a degree in primary school education.

That is possible because we have a reserve of teachers and professors. Of course, we do not have to continue to limitlessly increase that reserve. We know perfectly well its shortcomings, but the situation is different because now there is a large mass of teachers and professors, almost 300,000. That is a colossal figure. I do not think

that any other country in the world has that number. We now have to decide what to do with this mass: What will be the optimum use, the optimum utilization of this large mass that we have created? How can it help us in this great battle for quality in education? Right now, it helps us a lot to have time to conduct upgrade studies. There are many, as was mentioned here, who need to take upgrade training based on more stringent evaluation tests.

We know, because we have seen the data, of the cases of teachers rated as fair or poor, and those rated as good and very good. We know that. There is no need to be scared about it, nor lose hope at all. We have to find practical, intelligent solutions. We cannot base our actions on figures. I believe that the comrade was right. I do not believe that anyone was planning to act based on schematic figures. Estimates can be done. The ministry or whoever can make estimates on which cases have solutions or can be upgraded and which ones cannot improve. No one can establish a predetermined figure on the number that might have to be dropped or released from education. I have heard that many are given an opportunity to study, to improve, because although they are deficient, they are committed, they work hard, and they want to improve. We have to keep all these factors in mind.

One of the main advantages is that we no longer have a need for that mass of students studying to be primary school teachers, as well as professors. That really allows us to reduce this figure. By reducing that figure, which is what is being done and has been agreed on, we can make a much better selection, of course. It is preferable to use only 50 percent of our pool of teachers. There will always be something that needs to be done. Opportunities always arise. That capacity not only has to be used to train new teachers. It can also be used to train the ones that already exist, and for different courses. That will also happen in medicine and other university fields.

It is correct to state that the simple selection... [pauses] or reduction of that mass is not going to produce quality. Quality has to be developed through political, revolutionary, and scientific work, we could say. It is also political work. I believe that you are going to be a great help. That event itself, as the people become aware of it, is going to help many young people to realize what a noble role teachers and professors have, and how appreciated and valued they are.

That is going to help many to think, based on such recognition, based on that value—it is not a matter of recognition but of the just value—about the importance of the role played by teachers. I believe that it is essential. Your example is very important, so that many will want to do what you have done. Therefore, by not dealing with large numbers, we can select better and obtain prospective teachers who are best suited for teaching, and even create better conditions to train them.

It does not matter if we underuse that resource. It is much better to select 6,000 high-quality education students than to let 12,000 enroll without any screening. Right now we do not have any need for large numbers. Unquestionably, large numbers worked against quality. There were many people who wanted a different career but could not get it, and they ended up filtering into education. That is very bad. We have to ensure that only the best people end up in the educational field, not just a certain number of people, or that people who want a different career end up in the educational sector since they could not get what they wanted.

That was also happening with the medical career. Now we are decreasing the numbers. There was a time when 6,000 students would enroll every year. Now, only half that number enroll. They have better grades; it is a more selective process for that field. In other words, by decreasing the numbers we can increase the quality a lot. That is a top priority. It is very bad, very negative, that those students who did not have the opportunity to study for a different career are the ones who train to become teachers and professors to educate our youth and people. It is a disaster to let that happen. That does not mean that all those who entered the educational sector did not have the qualifications. Many had the right stuff, but many did not have all the requirements and quality needed to be a teacher. Now, we can reach this goal on the basis of a new awareness, on the basis of our present reality and a much clearer understanding of the importance of all of this. We have to establish the principle that only the best should go into education. This is the principle that was established when the first contingent was formed.

I think that in the first contingents there was more of the spirit of those first units, but later on it became a routine matter. It became too large and lost the quality of the first contingents. The contingents created later did not have such a high level of quality, especially after a few years had passed. These ideas have been discussed here together with all the other ones. I said that I did not want to begin analyzing them one by one.

The minister mentioned something important: the technological school being created, the preuniversity schools which we are turning into technological schools to train skilled workers for agriculture, and the vocational schools. There are a number of ideas regarding all of that, because everything conducive to training people for manual work is very important. It was a considerable step forward when the 43 preuniversity schools in the countryside became technological or polytechnical schools. What name did you give them? Polytechnical schools. Another 50 are also going to be converted. He has said that there will be 40 percent preuniversity schools and 60 percent of other types. When we heard it, 40 percent still seems a high number but, well, it is a change in the ratio.

I am not going to repeat the importance of many things that were mentioned here such as the example of the

teacher, his participation in productive activities in the schools, and all that, nor what a teacher's exemplary behavior represents morally. Several people have mentioned already the virtues that Mariano was demanding, the issue of exemplarity. But how can exemplarity be achieved? It cannot be obtained by decree. It is achieved through work, through motivation.

I know of a school—and I owe them a visit—that is named (Ciro Verro) near Guira de Melena. It is a preuniversity school near a camp named El Mamey, where there are workers from San Miguel del Padron. Foundry workers—and that is an extremely hard job—work there, and they were harvesting potatoes extracted with a tiller because the wetness of the soil made it impossible to use the machines. The potato harvesting work was extremely difficult. I asked them which was more difficult, the work in the foundry or harvesting potatoes under those conditions. Without any hesitation, they answered: This job is harder.

Well, around that time there was a critical situation and a lot of those potatoes could have been lost. Some schools, including the one I mentioned, closed down and for three days the students and teachers went to the fields to help harvest the potatoes under those conditions. The most interesting part is that they worked as hard as the foundry workers, and the foundry workers talked with admiration of the school, its teachers, and its students. Those students were praiseworthy, and in the heat of the battle and the problems they became exemplary. There were people who knew how to motivate and direct their efforts despite the problems which arose. These were not routine problems. The worst enemy we can have is routine. Routine has inflicted a lot of harm on us.

Right there they set an example. I asked the enterprises if they had any school like that around. They answered: Yes, we have one like that. I asked: And the other one? They said: No, the other one is not like this one; it is different. Well, what do you think is the reason? Well, the staff, the administration. There are many factors which have an impact, in those circumstances. So I said: All the schools have to be like the best one. Why is this one the best? What has to be done to make all the schools like this one?

Of course, there is another very important influence which I have noticed, that of the contingents and mobilized workers upon the students. Every time that the students have been linked to one of these camps, the spirit of the students and teachers has improved. Of course, I think some of that was mentioned. Not all enterprises have the same awareness. There has been paternalism. The comrade from Pinar del Rio brought up what I said about paternalism—I do not remember if it was at the National Association of Small Farmers Congress or the ceremony held on 29 April—regarding those work quotas. The same thing she said had happened with her daughter, I have also seen happen. The kids complete a very small work quota and spend the rest of the time playing or walking around, or having fun in the fields because they have already completed a work quota which was too small.

There was even a little book about it. I had quite a discussion with a farm director because of this. I asked him: Why was such an insignificant work quota set? These kids can easily complete it in four hours and then they play. He said: Well, it is in the little book. I asked him what book was he talking about, because I think that there was a book regarding certain accords between the agricultural and education sectors, specifying the work quotas to be set. I told him: Forget about that book; there is no book of any kind about it. [laughter] Do not waste my time with it. I criticized him strongly for bringing it up. I let him have it for confronting me with a little book. It was incredible.

One of those kids has enough energy to wear down 10 adults. They have to be doing something because their bodies, their natures, demand it, and you have such paternalism, you feel sorry for them, and give them these insignificant work quotas. That book had been superseded already; it had been eliminated. That farm director did not even know that the book no longer existed. He kept talking about a little book. We make up incredible bureaucratic, schematic things—I do not know what you would call it—rubbish, messes, which hamper people's initiative and potential.

All of that has happened. Although not all the schools are the same, I have seen great changes in the schools in the rural areas, particularly in the rural areas of the western provinces, in Havana Province. The education sector, the agricultural sector, the PCC, and everybody has to struggle to ensure that the best schools are used as models, and that those best schools set the standards for the rest of them.

Nevertheless, there has been improvement, I have observed great improvement, in the rural schools in these provinces. However, we must struggle hard against all those tendencies, all that paternalism. People do respond. I remember that at the ceremony on 29 April, I talked about how that worked. I said that we were coming to 1 May, and how could we not work on 1 May? Everyone had already planned to work till noon—the directors, not the workers. Well, everyone decided to work the entire day (?instead).

Then there was a Sunday coming up and the planting was behind. People did respond. Then came Mother's Day. Well, there was nothing we could do about that one; nevertheless, many people stayed out at the camps. They worked on that Sunday, Mother's Day, to try to catch up. Actually, when people are asked... [pauses] Rather than demanding things of them, what works better is to ask people to do things. Of course, one has to know how to ask. Whether it is a student, or a school, or anything else, you must show them the importance of what they are doing.

One must know how to criticize. Our comrades from the FEU [Federation of University Students] know that. The university students have shown exemplary behavior. But there are a few isolated cases of schools that have not been so exemplary. As soon as we learned of this, we would tell them, and they would discuss it. You cannot imagine the energy, the strength, that a person's sense of shame can have.

We generally do not know how to use that fabulous resource that a person's sense of shame and dignity constitutes. I have seen a number of those groups of university students that last year were mediocre and this year they kicked ass—to use a rather common expression. [chuckles] I do not know if you will criticize me for that. But, well there was a radical change after the groups' performance was criticized. One must know, one must be informed when they are not performing well, and what must be done.

I think an example of how this spirit of work, this patriotic spirit, is improving is being provided by the university students. In a two-week period, some 6,000 students were mobilized from medicine and pharmacy alone, and they performed excellently. In fact, the university departments have performed excellently in general, and I believe there is a big movement planned for the summer, involving the technical brigades. Yes, the university students are joining in massively, no longer only for those two-week mobilizations throughout the year, but also in the still more difficult mobilizations which take place in the summer months. There has been an increase in the work spirit, let us say.

I know that one of the things that you people have brought up is the recovery of it. More than a recovery, we must talk about taking it to higher levels than ever. Because not everything was lost. Some times may have been better than others. But academic standards of judgment, purely academic standards of judgment, began to prevail and prevail and prevail, and led almost to looking with scorn upon manual labor. To recover the best times would not suffice. We must go beyond those best times that we may have had, and take them to higher levels of quality too, with an awareness of work and the work spirit.

I know that among the topics you people discussed—and perhaps this will be the last one I will talk about—is the extremely important topic of history, the teaching of history, the transmitting of values. I think it is very tough, very sad, that the phenomenon of undervaluing history, or almost neglecting history, has occurred. That is also a spontaneous phenomenon, and it is a really very negative tendency, which derives from a number of factors that there is no point in analyzing here. We have always looked with great concern upon such undervaluing of the nation's history.

I mean, the histories of other countries were studied, and people knew more about the history of other countries than they did about the history of our own country. In fact, people knew very little about Latin America, which is our own hemisphere, the part of the world to which we belong, the part of the world with which we will have to unite in the future. There is talk of integration, but how can one make progress along the road to integration if we are ignorant about one another? If all the peoples of Latin America are ignorant of one another? If they are ignorant about their own histories? We cannot allow ourselves to be ignorant, not only of our own history, but also of the history of Latin America. However, we could not allow ourselves to be ignorant of world history either. The two are connected. We would be incomplete, mutilated, from a cultural point of view, if we were ignorant about world history. We must be very much aware of those three histories.

Now, the history of Cuba is an inexhaustible source of values, values that must and can be transmitted. As regards the struggle for independence, few countries have a history as splendid as Cuba's, because of the very difficult conditions under which it waged that struggle for independence, when this country's population was very small, fighting against hundreds of thousands of Spanish soldiers in the war of 1868, in the war of 1895, in the 10 Years' War. In the 10 Years' War, there is an infinite abundance of values that should be known and handed down. In the war of 1895, there is an infinite abundance of values that should be known and handed down.

I think that the best thing about our revolution is that it unites two kinds of values. It takes patriotic values, the values of the nation, the values of independence, of the struggles for independence, the values contained in our people's heroism and selflessness, in our people's deeds and virtues; and unites these values with the values socialism has brought us, the values Marxism-Leninism has brought us, the values internationalism has brought us.

I think this is the most wonderful thing, for us to be capable of uniting everything in our country, with those values brought to us by the most complete ideas about human society, social justice, true equality, and true fraternity among men. In our fight for independence, it was not yet possible to gather together those values, because our predecessors gathered together the highest values of that era. These generations have gathered together the values of that era, which continue to be extraordinarily valid, and united them with the new values of this era.

Because today we could not talk only about patriotism, independence, and freedom in the midst of a society of exploitation, in the midst of enormous, cruel inequality. There cannot be a nation unless it is a nation for all, as Marti wanted. Although Marti did not say this in a Marxist sense but with a profound sense of justice and equality among men, when he talked about the nation for all and the good of all. What does the good of all mean? Does it mean the good of the large landowners, the rich men, the great magnates, and nothing for the humble man, the man of the people? How can the good of all

exist with discrimination against women or racial discrimination, and the exploitation of man by man?

But those ideas were not yet developed. That awareness was not yet formed at the end of the last century. What was imperialism? They did not yet know what it was, but they learned later. What was imperialism, the phenomenon of imperialism that began then to insinuate itself in all its aspects? The war of intervention by the United States in Cuba was the first imperialist war in the modern sense of the word. But the Cubans did not really know then what that was.

The revolution now unites all those values. If you unite all those values, you really multiply them. You reinforce them, and give them a much more complete and finished ideology. But what internationalist ideology can we have, or what idea of social justice or socialism can we have if we forget our own historical roots? If we forget the path that was followed to reach this point? If we forget everything that led up to this? Or say that Carlos Manuel de Cespedes has nothing to do with the socialist revolution, or Ignacio Agramonte, or Maximo Gomez, or Maceo, or Marti? What would have happened to our country without the path they undertook to follow? We would have been sold to the United States one day. We would be Yankee territory. There would be no Cuban nation, no Cuban fatherland, no independent Cuba.

It is really terrible, if you imagine that we could be like they are in Los Angeles, or worse than in Los Angeles, where all those things have just happened. You can see what a country it would be if we were like other countries. We would be an imperialist ghetto. We would not have a nation or independence without the struggle of those men. How can we be ignorant of that, and why did all the emphasis and stress put on Marxism-Leninism have to lead us to be ignorant of our country's roots, the heroic and glorious path that had been followed to reach that point, to be able to make this synthesis. Unfortunately, it happened, and we regret it. We regret it very much that it happened and we consider it an extremely negative tendency. It is not just now that we think this. We have for a while. For some time we have been aware of the problems and fought to reverse the situation.

At a meeting a few years ago with comrades from the FEU, we talked about those topics, not this topic specifically but in general. We talked about general culture, history in general, which includes Cuba's history, of course. I think that what is said about Cuba's history, the tendency to neglect it, is applicable to Latin American history. Of course, it was never very widespread in our country. It was not well known. But we, the revolution, could not ignore it.

I think that what is said regarding the undervaluing must be said with respect to world history. I even asked that a few volumes be given to me that had been written from a socialist point of view, to see what that history was like, whether it was intelligible. Really, I found some good things, but a little scattered, in parts. On that occasion, we suggested to the Ministry of Culture and the organizations created to print books, that a series of books be printed, classic works of history, classic works of philosophy, classic works in different fields that could not be found in existing books, or in the bookstores or libraries. There might be a few books in some libraries. I would say that we need a complete knowledge of our history. We need a complete knowledge of Latin American history, complete knowledge of world history. But I will say more: We simply need complete world culture.

It is not a matter of a specific problem concerning history. We have to think about what to do and what we should do to develop this world culture. Of course, we need good textbooks in our schools. We have to obtain them one way or another, and as quickly as possible. But the textbooks should serve simply to arouse the curiosity and interest of the students and to guide them. The foundation for that complete knowledge I am talking about, really truly complete knowledge, should be laid in the schools, but it must be acquired over the course of a lifetime. There is no other way. It is impossible.

We need books, and with a few comrades from the FEU and the UJC we are analyzing a whole list of books. How many are there? There may be 500, 600, perhaps 1,000 books which in our opinion every citizen of this country has to be familiar with in one way or another, has to have read. Not only over six months or a year, but they must have them there, have the opportunity of knowing that they exist and what they are about. Of course, teachers need them, and history teachers need them, to consult them, to do research. I think that we have to make every citizen a researcher of history and culture in general, because that is the only way of attaining that goal. School must give them the foundation, and arouse their interest, and society must provide the opportunity for them to be researchers and scholars.

Because when the desire to learn is aroused, it is inexhaustible. It is infinite. People who do not have a desire to learn miss one of the most beautiful things in life, one of the most extraordinary opportunities in life for any human being, and perhaps one of the greatest pleasures a person can enjoy. We should not forget the society we live in, a technological society with mass media. If you sit and think about the number of movies that are produced in the world, to be seen in those famous videos, you are horrified. There is such an enormous amount of nonsense and alienating things that one must wonder what kind of culture a human being may acquire. Often when watching programs... [pauses] And I do not say this to criticize any television network, but television is a terrible weapon. It can be used for very good things. It can be used to educate and to teach. The visual image has a great educational value if it is used well. There is no doubt about that. But really the use television is put to in the world is such that what it produces is ignorant people, superficially educated people, and alienated people, because of the commercial uses of mass media.

What happens? Almost everywhere in the world, the kids and teenagers spend four or five hours in front of the television. They do not study. In other times, people studied more, and they acquired more profound culture, because they had to read a lot of books. But even in this time, those who know how to discover the value of books... [pauses] I will tell the truth: I would not exchange a book for television. I would not exchange it. There are people for whom it is very difficult to set a book aside to watch a good movie. I do not say this to slight the good movies, which must be seen, but when you get involved in a book and you see all the wealth contained in a book, it is very hard for you to set the book aside to watch a movie the day it is shown.

Because what books teach... [pauses] Movies teach a lot of things, but what a book contains, a book's content, a book's wealth, cannot be shown in a movie. Because even those movies that try to express the content of the best works [of literature] are caricatures of the best works. If anyone wants the movie to resemble the book, it is extremely costly. I can give you an example: a well-known movie, "War and Peace." It is a great movie, a phenomenal movie, and it lasts four or five hours. You can see it two or three times. How much did it cost, and how many thousands or tens of thousands of people participated in it? But anyone who has seen "War and Peace" three times would not exchange a single reading of the book "War and Peace" for seeing the movie three times. There is no comparison between the book and movie if you want to know what really happened at that time, what the customs were, how people thought, what all the events were.

Sometimes one has been able to observe this—the value of books—through some personal experience. We have to recover the value of books, the love for reading. We have built a large number of libraries. No one can deny that. We have culture centers everywhere. But what are our libraries like? What books do they have? How many books do they have? How much of a habit do we have of reading and studying? How much time do people waste now in other things which are escapist or simply recreational? There is nothing more recreational than a book, but it teaches a lot at the same time.

We must base ourselves on books if we want to achieve these historic goals, about the different histories and general knowledge, including literature. You do not have to read all the books that are published in the world; there are incredible numbers of them. But you have to know how to select those books, and if we cannot put 10,000 books within reach of our people, we must know that there are 800, 900, or 1,000 at least that cannot be lacking from any library. We must buy them, or print them, whichever costs less. But printing them is much more favorable to us now that hard currency is so short, now that we have such difficult economic problems. If we can print them with what we have, and printing costs half as much, we should print these books, as a rule, although it is not easy to print 1,000 books.

The other day we were discussing the problem in the Politburo, the suitability of working out a publishing program like this. Really, those who want to know, those who have a correct view of the problem of knowledge, cannot feel happy on a day they do not learn something. Age does not matter. It does not matter whether one is young, middle aged, or old. I think that one must learn up to the last day of one's life, and the day you do not learn something new is a wasted day for a human being. The day that one does not learn something new, one's life has been limited, diminished. That is why one must read, even if only for half an hour if there is no more time, if you cannot read for one, two, or three hours. One must manage to do that.

One has to learn, and that is self-preparation, as you call it, self-study or whatever you call it. That is, people have to improve themselves. One of the things that must be taught in the schools is to study, to be self-taught, because the vast majority of knowledge is not going to be acquired in school. The foundation is acquired in school. You must learn to study, to do research, in school. In school, you must be infected with the virus of the desire and need to know things. You have talked about transmitting values, and I cannot imagine how we can really transmit values without studying and reading. If you do not know Cuba's history, you can never feel inspired by the extraordinary examples of our patriots, the wars of 1868 and 1895. Those were wonderful characters. Studying history is a way of acquiring values. It is a way of being inspired by those men who were really exemplary.

When we talk about the exemplary nature of teachers and their influence, you should think of the value of the influence of all the outstanding men in the history of this country. When you find an example of heroism, you receive the influence of that example of heroism, patriotism, courage, tenacity, resoluteness, and disinterest. Who is not moved by a case of supreme disinterest? Who is not moved by a person who is capable of giving his life for others? Who does not admire a mother who gives her life for her child? Or who gives her kidney, or a piece of her liver if she has to, to save her child? Or bone marrow or whatever? Who does not admire even more those who, although they are not children or fathers or mothers, are capable of giving everything for others, are capable of giving their lives?

A good example has an influence on everything, not only in school. It influences history and society. To be ignorant of history is to lose an inexhaustible source of values. It is to miss an infinite opportunity to transmit values. We should create these opportunities for the people. We should not stop until we succeed in putting these opportunities within everyone's reach. I would say that those good books should have as high a priority as our monthly rations, as bread, tubers, milk, or food. Because not only material food but also spiritual food is necessary during the special period and at all times. We cannot forego our spiritual food.

We have to continue to analyze how much paper costs, and how much it would cost to print 10,000 volumes. It would be impossible for us to print millions of books so that everyone could have them in their homes, but there should not be any university without them. We are doing a few things in that regard. There should not be a school, there should not be a single library, there should not be a single community that does not have this selection of books, which include the best works of humanity, the most important and interesting books of humanity, which give a clear idea of the world in which we have been born and lived, and the history of human beings, the species we belong to.

This collection of books should include the best creations of man's intellect, and I am not talking about 20,000 or 10,000 books. I am talking about 1,000 or possibly fewer. But they should be available to everyone, and be everywhere where there are teachers. Because it is not only for history. I think physics teachers have to know history also, and have a complete culture. If not, physics makes no sense. What is physics alone, abstract, we could say, separate from society, separate from human history or human life? You cannot feel happy if all you know is physics, or chemistry, or mathematics, or medicine. A person is incomplete if he does not know other things.

I am not saying that a secondary school graduate should know all this, but a secondary school graduate or mid-level technician or whatever should know what the fundamental works are and where the fundamental sources of general knowledge are, including political knowledge. It is essential for these sources to be known, so that one may study throughout one's life. There are wonderful works on Cuban history, on our struggles for independence, and some on later eras also. They are of enormous interest, because one comes to know the people, and I recommend that when you [words indistinct] I think they printed an edition (?abroad) of a book containing Cespedes's lost diary, as Leal [not further identified] calls it. It is a dramatic thing, very human, and it helps us to know our history, not only its great things but also some things that are painful or sad.

I recommend it so that you will find out a little about that drama we have heard about. I give this example, but there are many books. There is a book about the republic that was born in 1902, a history of so-called Cuban independence. It is a shame that every Cuban has not read it or seen it. It is called "The Republic" and is by Professor Julio de Riberango. It is a wonderful book, and when one reads it one is filled with indignation, or rage even, when one sees what was done to us. When one reads about the historical period between 1898 when the intervention occurred and 1902, one is filled with rage and indignation.

When one sees how the Yankees ignored our government in arms, they ignored our people in arms, they intervened and disregarded us, and made peace with Spain, and Cuba was given into the hands of the Yankees, one is filled with rage and indignation. How they abused us!

When one thinks that one day the soldiers of the army of liberation had to go and hand over their guns for $75, and one sees how that army which was the guarantee of our independence, which had fought for so many years, disappeared; when one thinks that those heroic men had to undergo that humiliation of handing over their guns to receive $75; one is filled with curiosity to find out how it was possible that this should happen.

I repeat, one is filled with rage and indignation when one finds out about that whole episode, the disarming of the army of liberation, the demobilization, the surrender of weapons, the Platt Amendment, the daily intervention by the imperialists throughout the Republic. It is a shame that at a time like this all this is not well known. Because then a revolutionary feels more revolutionary; a committed person feels more committed. Even the coldest person feels indignant, if he has an atom of patriotism. That gives us an idea of the task we are doing now, the great historic mission our people are carrying out now in this special period, and the values we are defending, and how all this is worthwhile, and what Cubans did in other times so that we could have this nation and this independence, and how that hope and possibility were vilely mocked.

We must know these things. How can we be revolutionaries if we do not know these things, if we do not know all these things that make us angry and indignant, that let us know the enemy and know how the enemy has always acted throughout history, and what the enemy wants to do now? So studying history, and studying it in depth, is perhaps the most extraordinary tool we have for transmitting values, patriotic feelings, revolutionary feelings, heroic feelings.

I hope this meeting will serve for reflection on these matters. I hope this productive meeting will lead us to taking a wise, intelligent, and realistic course in order to achieve what you have proposed: educating complete men and women, transmitting values, developing superior beings. Because our history is full of men and women who were superior beings, and we have to make it so that we will arouse in everyone a desire to be a superior being, a better being, to be like them. We need examples. We need models. There we have an inexhaustible wealth of values.

So bringing up this subject—at this time, in my opinion, it is the most important subject—is really very useful and very significant. I have not tried to talk to you about all the points, as I said before, but I think that it was necessary to analyze here this particular subject of history and these ideas, and reflect on them here. You should reflect on them. We have to reflect on everything you have proposed. I wanted to take advantage of this opportunity to express these thoughts.

I do not think this will be the only time we will meet. I think 10 years from now would be too long a time. [applause] We would be in a bad way if we had to wait 10 years to analyze all this again. Thus, I return to the idea

that next year the other contingent should meet. But this contingent should send representatives, form a committee or whatever, like the one that... [pauses] It is true that you have a union, but I am not referring to all the professors and teachers. The union should help us with this. The union should help so that in one way or another each contingent will be organized. I think that each contingent should have representatives, a small group that will represent it and help to maintain the unity of this battalion, as we call it, or this regiment of the revolution. It is not exactly a regiment of veterans, but a regiment of men and women at the peak of their talent, experience, and revolutionary enthusiasm. [applause]

Robertico and the others should meet next year, and representatives of this contingent should also come. You are hereby invited. [applause] I hope we will all fit in here, or we can go to—well, it is not as comfortable as here—over there, the Karl Marx Theater. It is still called the Karl Marx Theater, and it will always be called the Karl Marx Theater. [applause] In 1994 the third contingent should meet. This commitment has been established. In the future the others at least at the level of... [pauses] but they should also be organized and have their representatives. If once, 20 years ago, we formed a vanguard, we are going to form another now. We are going to form another detachment of which the first contingent is this one, the second is the next one, the third is the next one, and we can gather together 2,000 or 3,000 knowledgeable people.

Forgive me if I have gone too far and offended your modesty, but we are going to gather together people who know things, people who have accumulated experiences, and create a vanguard for the Cuban school that is being talked about, for the goals that have been mentioned here, for the quality of education. If 20 years ago we created the detachment and we organized the first contingent to spread education, to teach those children who were coming up from the primary schools, today we have to create the detachment for quality in education. [applause]

You will not be the only ones working in it, but you will be a vanguard working in it. You will be researchers at your workplaces, because you are everywhere, including in the party. So by seeing what is happening in each place... [pauses] What a shame we cannot be there to see what is happening in each place! It is a privilege to be in a school and see everything. Of course, it is the country's privilege to have these combatants for quality in education, these researchers into what is happening wherever they work, in any job. We must use this wealth of knowledge in this new era that is beginning. We must work quickly and not wait until we meet with the second or third contingent to begin to work. We must begin to work tomorrow. We must begin to analyze and see everything tomorrow, and keep in contact. Then in the future, we must continue the exchanges.

I would say that on this 20th anniversary, the task we must set for ourselves, and we want to set it for you, is to organize a new detachment and be the first contingent of that detachment, the detachment for quality in education. [applause]

I do not have anything to add. I have to leave quickly along with other comrades who are here, because we are going to attend a wedding. It is the wedding of some serious people. We hope it will last. If not, we would not go. But we trust in these comrades, one of whom has been a FEU leader. It is between a former FEU leader and a current FEU leader. We changed their wedding also, not the day but the time. It was going to be at 1930 and now it is at 2100. They were lucky we did not change the day for them. So we did not move it to Sunday, but they will have a very short honeymoon because there is no time for a longer one right now. They are waiting for us, and I have already said what I wanted to say.

I thank you. I thank you, and I am very thankful for the opportunity for this meeting. Socialism or death, fatherland or death, we will win! [applause]

Castro Interviewed on Soviet Collapse, Stalin

PA0306230792 Managua EL NUEVO DIARIO in Spanish 2 Jun 92 p 4

[Part I of an interview with Cuban President Fidel Castro by Tomas Borge, place, date not given; published simultaneously on 2 June in the Mexico City newspaper, EXCELSIOR, and in the Madrid newspaper, EL PAIS]

[Text] [Borge] I find Fidel as always, in good spirits, very dynamic, dressed in his incontestable olive green uniform.

I had a dream several nights ago that his beard was a very special color, undefinable, and I was almost taken back when I saw again the luminous white symbol. In the middle of his forehead—I presume you have been told this before—is a sort of ray of light; the eyes feverish, affectionate, direct; a little thinner, a bit younger.

Several years have gone by since I overcame the inhibition that his presence once produced in me. But I feel inhibited again in this singular context. I recall that we have talked at this same site for hours on diverse issues: from human grief to private conflicts. (Fidel interrupts me many times). At one time I think we had a long conversation on power. I am going to ask him some questions on power during the conversation.

This time I face him as a reporter. This time I have the difficult task of probing him, of posing tricky questions, in search of new answers.

It is said that he is the most outstanding personality in the contemporary world. One's response to him is Manichean: Either you love him or you hate him.

Those who love him consider him irreproachable, which in effect I believe he is because he never lies, not even when he is authoritarian or obstinate. Those defects make him even more human.

At times he forgets some of the details concerning the way he dresses, but no one says anything.

I am under the impression that his comrades—much too overly cautious—do not dare to question some of his ideas, even though they consider them wrong.

Even those who hate him respect him. The face of the men on the street, who define the sensibility of the Latin American people, light up—as we saw today—when he approaches them to shake their hands.

You know something about the amazing avalanche of light that surrounds you, Fidel. That is why I ask you, what does the assurance of your immortality produce in you?

[Castro] Before I respond to your question, I must say that I have listened with great interest to your words; I am truly marveled by your capacity to express yourself, by the beautiful manner in which you speak, by your poetic manner. It is said that the poet is born and that the speaker is made. I made myself somewhat of a speaker. You are even a better speaker than I. You have an advantage, you are a born poet and a born speaker. I was not born a poet and I made myself a speaker.

You said that you were going to try to overcome some inhibitions, to work as a reporter. But, since there are ties of great friendship, trust, mutual understanding, affection, and a great deal of respect between you and I, my role is much more difficult than yours because I must respond to your questions. If an unfriendly reporter interviews me I can argue a great deal, I can respond aggressively, I can attack, counterattack, and indulge in a polemic. It is going to be very difficult for me to attack in this fashion a reporter who is my friend, even though you are capable of posing much more difficult questions than other reporters.

You asked me how it feels to know they are part of history. I have rarely stop to think about these matters. I believe that a revolutionary cannot think of glory or of history.

The concern with history would not correspond to the disinterest that every revolutionary should have, because I think that a revolutionary should be willing to give up everything for the victory of an idea and not be concerned with himself.

There are other matters that I learn everyday with the common people; I encounter so many people of merit and I am conscious of that merit, of the role they have played in this entire process. If one is fair, one realizes that history tends to be unfair when leaders are attributed too much merit and when the millions who raised them to the highest levels of local and international public opinion are practically forgotten.

What does concern me is that ideas prevail. If the mission is lost, what significance have those men who participated in that mission trying to reach those goals? Tomas: I believe that whomever thinks like this cannot pay too much attention to what glory he will receive or to the place he will be granted in history. I would prefer 1000 times to think of the place in history that the causes we are defending will have. One of the reasons I admire Jose Marti and one of the most beautiful phrases I ever read by Marti states: All of the world's glory fits in a kernel of corn.

Interview Continues

PA0506003892 Managua EL NUEVO DIARIO in Spanish 3 Jun 92 p 4

[Part II of an interview with Cuban President Fidel Castro by Tomas Borge; place, date not given]

[Text] [Borge] Montesquieu said history is the noise surrounding certain events, but there are events that are simply not noise, like the collapse of the socialist countries and the survival of the Cuban revolution. Does this at mean you are going down in history?

[Castro] I would say the simple fact that we decided to keep going forward when the socialist bloc collapsed, and now that we have become the only victim of a vicious imperialist attack, is a significant event in history. The mere fact that Cuba has decided to keep going forward and face the dangers and the challenges following the collapse of the socialist bloc and the disappearance of the USSR is a significant event in history.

Tomas, it is not a matter, however, of what we may have done up until now or of what we may be capable of withstanding from here on. I believe it all depends on what lies ahead because that will determine the real significance of what we are doing today.

[Borge] Undoubtedly you have much confidence in that, and I share it. Does that mean the Cuban revolution is the beginning of a resurrection of a socialist option at the world level?

[Castro] I believe we are defending certain principles that are immensely, extraordinarily valuable at a moment of confusion in the world. It is a time for opportunists, a time in which politicians are trying to accommodate themselves, and we may say it is a time of apotheosis for imperialist military and political power.

Mankind has never before experienced such a reactionary expansion and empire building. That does not mean it will go on forever. That empire is corroded by all types of contradictions. We are living in the present and I believe that preserving our values is of great importance for all men who want the best for humanity. I believe and I have always believed that symbols are of great importance, flags are of great value. I believe that even if we became a lonely island, that would be of great value. If we were invaded and were capable of resisting until the end, that would have great value. If we were capable of prevailing, as we will undoubtedly prevail, because it would be impossible to exterminate millions of men determined to fight, that would have great value.

[Borge] You recently said, not referring to socialism in general but to the USSR in particular, that socialism had been assassinated, stabbed in the back. In this conspiracy of daggers that killed socialism, would you say Gorbachev was one of the assassins?

[Castro] No, I could not say that about Gorbachev because I have another view of Gorbachev and it is not one of an assassin who plotted the USSR's destruction.

The USSR self-destructed in an incredible way. The responsibility for that self-destruction undoubtedly lies in the hands of the country's leaders, those who led that nation. Now, some of them were aware they were destroying it and others were not. That is what I was trying to say, more or less, and we saw it all from the beginning.

I cannot say Gorbachev played a role in which he was aware of the destruction of the USSR because I have no doubt that Gorbachev intended to fight to improve socialism.

We approved of Soviet efforts to improve socialism in the USSR. But we could not approve of, and never would have agreed to, not only the destruction of socialism in the USSR, but also the destruction of the USSR itself. That inflicted terrible damage on all peoples of the world and created a bad situation for the Third World in particular.

Imperialism would have been able to disintegrate the Soviet Union, had the Soviets not destroyed themselves, had those responsible for the strategies and tactics and for the country's political and government policies not destroyed the country. In other words, socialism did not die from natural causes: it was a suicide, socialism was murdered. That is what I meant.

[Borge] Fidel, for most Latin American revolutionary leaders, the current crisis of socialism has a mastermind: Josef Stalin.

[Castro] I believe Stalin made big mistakes but also showed great wisdom.

In my opinion, blaming Stalin for everything that occurred in the Soviet Union would be historical simplism, because no man by himself could have created certain conditions. It would be the same as giving Stalin all the credit for what the USSR once was. That is impossible! I believe that the efforts of millions and millions of heroic people contributed to the USSR's development and to its relevant role in the world in favor of hundreds of millions of people.

I have criticized Stalin for a lot of things. First of all, I criticized his violation of the legal framework.

I believe Stalin committed an enormous abuse of power. That is another conviction I have always had.

I feel that Stalin's agricultural policy did not develop a progressive process to socialize land. In my opinion, the land socialization process should have begun earlier and should have been gradually implemented. Because of its violent implementation, it had a very high economic and human cost in a very brief period of history.

I also feel that Stalin's policy prior to the war was totally erroneous. No one can deny that western powers promoted Hitler until he became a monster, a real threat. The terrible weakness shown by western powers before Hitler cannot be denied. This at encouraged Hitler's expansionism and Stalin's fear, which led Stalin to do something I will criticize all my life, because I believe that it was a flagrant violation of principles: seek peace with Hitler at any cost, stalling for time.

During our revolutionary life, during the relatively long history of the Cuban Revolution, we have never negotiated a single principle to gain time, or to obtain any practical advantage. Stalin fell for the famous Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact at a time when Germans were already demanding the delivery of the Danzig Corridor.

I feel that, far from gaining time, the nonaggression pact reduced time, because the war broke out anyway. Then, in my opinion, he made another big mistake, because when Poland was being attacked, he sent troops to occupy that territory, which was disputed because it had a Ukrainian or Russian population, I am not sure.

I also believe that the little war against Finland was another terrible mistake, from the standpoint of principles and international law.

Stalin made a series of mistakes that were criticized by a large part of the world, and which placed Communists—who were great friends of the USSR—in a very difficult position by having to support each one of those episodes.

Since we are discussing this topic, I must tell you that I have never discussed it with any journalist (or on any other occasion, he added).

The things I mentioned are against principles and doctrine; they are even contrary to political wisdom. Although it is true that there was a period of one year and nine months from September 1939 to June 1941 during which the USSR could have rearmed itself, Hitler was the one who got stronger.

If Hitler had declared war on the USSR in 1939, the destruction would have been less than the destruction caused in 1941, and he would have suffered the same fate as Napoleon Bonaparte. With the people's participation in an irregular war, the USSR would have defeated Hitler.

Finally, Stalin's character, his terrible distrust of everything, made him commit several other mistakes: one of them was falling in the trap of German intrigue and conducting a terrible, bloody purge of the armed forces and practically beheading the Soviet Army on the eve of war.

[Borge] What do you believe were Stalin's merits?

[Castro] He established unity in the Soviet Union. He consolidated what Lenin had begun: party unity. He gave the international revolutionary movement a new impetus. The USSR's industrialization was one of Stalin's wisest actions, and I believe it was a determining factor in the USSR's capacity to resist.

One of Stalin's—and the team that supported him—greatest merits was the plan to transfer the war industry and main strategic industries to Siberia and deep into Soviet territory.

I believe Stalin led the USSR well during the war. According to many generals, Zhukov and the most brilliant Soviet generals, Stalin played an important role in defending the USSR and in the war against Nazism. They all recognized it.

I think there should be an impartial analysis of Stalin. Blaming him for everything that happened would be historical simplism.

'Diplomatic Source' in Haiti on Bazin's Rejection

FL0506010192 Havana Radio Reloj Network in Spanish 2241 GMT 4 Jun 92

[Text] A diplomatic source said in Haiti today that the appointment of rightist politician Marc Bazin as prime minister of Haiti is one more maneuver by the military that reveals Bazin's ties with the coupists. The method employed by the Armed Forces to control the political situation in Haiti today consists of combining repression with cunning tricks such as the appointment of Bazin, said the official in question, who insisted on anonymity.

Bazin is considered by the Army leadership to be the best card in the game, capable of convincing the international community. However, everyone saw through the maneuver and no one swallowed the bait. The diplomat, who refused to identify himself, added that up to now there have been only expressions of rejection, both inside and outside the country, of the action taken by the Haitian military, which is trying to consolidate its government by making it look like a civilian government.

Haiti

Further on Bazin Appointment as Prime Minister

Aristide Condemns Appointment

FL0406210892 Port-au-Prince Radio Metropole in French 1600 GMT 4 Jun 92

[Text] Ousted President Aristide, now residing in Washington, has condemned the appointment of a new prime minister in Haiti and is asking the international community to take measures against the current regime. Jean-Bertrand Aristide was interviewed by THE NEW YORK TIMES and USA TODAY during the period when a plan for a solution to the crisis, including the appointment of Marc Bazin as prime-minister, was being announced in Port-au-Prince. Jean-Bertrand Aristide asserts that this appointment is illegal, adding that the legal way is the constitutional, democratic way. He further asks for an effective strengthening of the embargo. The OAS has promised to reinforce the embargo. Aristide, in USA TODAY, states that it is now a matter of doing it.

Questioned about the statements of support for democracy made by the United States, he responds that this is very nice, but that he would like the communiques to become actions. We have seen ships carrying fuel arrive in Haiti only around four days ago, he says, explaining the fact that the country's authorities are suffering no real restrictions.

Jean-Bertrand Aristide believes that a naval blockade will eventually become necessary to oust the regime that overthrew him. Aristide told THE NEW YORK TIMES that when General Raoul Cedras realizes that the fuel is no longer arriving in Haiti, it will provide his first realization that he no longer has allies.

To the ousted president, the time is appropriate to strengthen the embargo. Several political and financial supporters of the coup d'etat are beginning to withdraw. Aristide believes that the only way to avoid violence and revenge is to reestablish democracy. The ousted president finds the situation in Haiti explosive. It is a real volcano, he says, asserting that violence has increased during recent weeks. He names about 300 killed during the month of May.

International Support Sought

FL0406141492 Port-au-Prince Radio Metropole in French 1100 GMT 4 Jun 92

[Text] The international community must respect the implementation of the law on the tripartite agreement. The man, who said so, expressed himself with conviction. That man is the president of the parliament, Senator Dejean Belizaire, who asserted on Radio Metropole that the agreement represents an act of sovereignty. The Senate president stated that he hopes that the world community will take the respect for Haiti's sovereignty into account.

[Begin recording] [Belizaire] All that I can ask the international community is to understand that all that has been done was done with complete freedom, with complete consciousness and was at the same time the result of the works of the executive power, the Haitian Armed Forces, and the legislative power. Besides, I say that this tripartite agreement resulting from the tripartite assembly—which we held, which we had—has been ratified, has been ratified in separate chambers by the two branches of the legislative power. It is an act of sovereignty. Insofar as the international community has the slightest respect for the Haitian people, for its sovereignty, it must essentially support and favorably receive what has been done because there is [word indistinct] in this country, that is the Haitian Parliament which exercised its sovereignty. So, we hope that the initiative that

was taken by those three powers or those two powers will be well understood by the international community.

[Unidentified reporter] Furthermore in this interview, Sen. Belizaire called on the people to support the consensus government. He also said that this solution should allow the country to overcome the crisis. Concerning the choice of Marc Bazin as prime minister, the Senate president pointed out that the leader of the Movement for the Establishment of Democracy in Haiti is well placed to manage the crisis. Sen. Belizaire also said that Prime Minister-Designate Marc Bazin was condemned [as heard] to succeed in the event that he is ratified.

[Belizaire] I think Mr. Bazin is one of those who can lead this country in this particular circumstance. We think Mr. Bazin must do all he can to untangle the crisis. He is condemned [as heard] to succeed. So, what we can ask everyone for is to fully support what has resulted from all the meetings that we held lately.

[Unidentified reporter] In... [pauses] By the way, the Senate president also told us that a calendar was being prepared by the provisional executive as to the transfer of powers. [end recording]

Deputies Against Appointment

FL0406145092 Port-au-Prince Radio Metropole in French 1100 GMT 4 Jun 92

[Text] While anticipating the verdict of the session of parliament which has been convened for 4 June, two deputies have publicly expressed themselves against the vote.

Ancelot Vernort, a member of the socialist bloc has joined the National Front for Change and Democracy [FNCD] position to demand the return of President Aristide. In his opinion, the consensus government announced by a de facto regime cannot be other than its remnants [as heard]. The deputy of the socialist bloc thinks the Washington Agreement would create a tranquil political arena.

Another deputy, Jacques Lafleur, who was elected deputy for the first district of Cap-Haitien, has announced his resignation on principle and has rejected the choice of Marc Bazin. I declare, he wrote, that I consider myself as someone who has resigned until the deputies of the Haitian people become aware of the fact that they may not sell the mandate of this people to anyone, so the country can go back to the constitutional path with Jean-Bertrand Aristide for a reason of principle on the legal path of justice, unquote. [no reference to opening quote as heard]

'Diplomatic Isolation' Possible

FL0406191392 Port-au-Prince Radio Tropic FM in French 1600 GMT 4 Jun 92

[Excerpts] The session to ratify Marc Bazin as new consensus prime minister, scheduled for 1400 GMT this morning, had not yet begun at 1555 GMT. Only two senators and 10 deputies were present in the Legislative Palace.

[Begin unidentified correspondent recording] [passage omitted] We are on the spot, but the session has not yet begun. I see deputies walking into the parliament but there are only two senators present in the Senate. It is 1555 GMT. I do not know whether the session will begin, or when. We are on location; we will keep you advised. [end recording]

[Passage omitted] Political Commentators in Port-au-Prince say that even before he is ratified by parliament, Marc Bazin and his possible government are already facing diplomatic isolation. In fact, international reactions are far from favorable to the leader of the Movement for the Establishment of Democracy in Haiti. The OAS, France, and the United States have already announced that they condemn this appointment. [passage omitted]

Senate Ratifies Appointment

FL0506112292 Port-au-Prince Radio Nationale in Creole 1000 GMT 5 Jun 92

[Excerpts] [Passage omitted] The legislative body was convened to meet in an unique session on 4 June to make a decision on the choice of Mr. Bazin as the prime minister of the new government whose mission it will be to untangle the country which has been faced with a crisis for eight months. The session began with a quorum of 13 senators. A senatorial committee comprised of Senator Amos Andre, Senator Thomas Eddy Dupiton, and Senator Bernard Sansaricq posed many questions to Movement for the Establishment of Democracy in Haiti leader Marc Bazin who did not fail to answer all these questions with ease. [passage omitted]

At the end of the phase during which questions were being asked of the prime minister-designate, the report of the committee was voted on after many interventions by Senator Robert Opont [a member of the Haitian Christian Democratic Party] who was looking for explanations on the political union to be enacted with the other sector that is putting into practice the policy of empty seats at the parliament [reference to the National Front for Change and Democracy parliamentarians who have been practising absenteeism to express their discontent for several weeks]. Then, Mr. Bazin was ratified as prime minister by the senators. He will be notified by a letter when he is expected to outline his general policy before the Senate of the Republic.

[Begin Senate President Dejean Belizaire recording in French] Given the vote which was taken with the participation of 14 senators, we all note 12 votes for the report that was presented by the committee and one vote against. I will remind you that the president does not vote. So, on the basis of this vote, we can say that Mr. Marc Bazin is ratified as prime minister by the Senate of the Republic. [applause] So, [word indistinct] this means

that he is ratified within the scope of this first step of the procedure and is consequently empowered to present, in the near future, a statement of his general policy. [passage omitted] [end recording]

Bazin Comments

FL0506125492 Port-au-Prince Radio Tropic FM in French 1100 GMT 5 Jun 92

[Text] The Upper Chamber approved the choice of Movement for the Establishment of Democracy in Haiti [MIDH] leader Marc Louis Bazin as the new Haitian prime minister within the scope of the Villa d'Accueil tripartite agreement. The Lower Chamber is expected to make a decision on the appointment today.

Answering questions by a senatorial committee on 4 June, the MIDH leader asserted that his government intends to resume negotiations to find a final solution to the Haitian crisis as stipulated in the text of the tripartite agreement in the event that he is ratified by the parliament. Mr. Bazin pointed out that the tripartite agreement provided for the resumption of negotiations and that he would tackle these negotiations with the political willingness to succeed. He asserted that the tripartite agreement is not a closed door but an open window, explaining that, in his opinion, the Washington Agreement had forgotten the essential protagonists in the crisis, that is, the provisional government and the Army.

[Begin Bazin recording in Creole] To negotiate with the international community and to search for a ground acceptable to the protagonists, the Father [reference to ousted President Jean-Bertrand Aristide] must definitely be part of it. Just as a prime minister was designated by Father Aristide jointly with the Assembly presidents, there is another situation in which a prime minister has been designated by constitutional President Joseph Nerette jointly with the Assembly presidents. Thus, our problem now is to reconcile both procedures so as to realize the bringing together we are looking for in order to resolve the situation. [end recording]

El Salvador

Diplomatic Relations Established With Russia

PA0406155292 San Salvador Canal Doce Television in Spanish 0300 GMT 4 Jun 92

[Report by Mauricio Ramirez]

[Excerpts] Deputy Foreign Minister Ricardo Orlando Valdivieso has confirmed that, beginning on 3 June, El Salvador will begin diplomatic, commercial, and consular relations with the Russian Federation led by Boris Yeltsin.

Deputy Foreign Minister Ricardo Valdivieso confirmed the report, which originated at UN headquarters. Valdivieso added that it is the result of a series of bilateral meetings he and Dr. Pacas Castro conducted in Washington.

[Begin Valdivieso recording] Full diplomatic relations will be established. We still have to implement it, but the formal establishment of relations has become a reality. We will begin diplomatic, commercial, and all kinds of relations. Of course, implementation of the relations is pending. [end recording] [passage omitted]

Valdivieso said that, for the time being, Dr. Ricardo Castaneda will head the Salvadoran Embassy.

[Begin Valdivieso recording] Personally, I am very pleased about the establishment of relations with the Russian Federation. An ambassador will be designated to represent us before the Russian Federation. No mechanism or candidates have been found yet. However, because of budget considerations, we are handling relations with Russia, for the time being, through our ambassador to the United Nations. [end recording] [passage omitted]

Shafik Handal on Cristiani Administration, Accords

PA0406173992 San Salvador Canal Doce Television in Spanish 0300 GMT 4 Jun 92

[Text] FMLN [Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front] leader Jorge Shafik Handal stated on 3 June that the best evaluation that could be done of President Alfredo Cristiani will depend on his performance in the next two years. In addition, he confirmed that the rebels and the government are working together to bring the implementation schedule of the peace accords up to date.

Communist commander Jorge Shafik Handal confirmed on 3 June that the bilateral agreements between the government and FMLN continue to progress smoothly so as to prevent a rescheduling of the implementation of the peace accords. Shafik Handal referred to the issue cautiously.

[Begin Shafik Handal recording] Shortly before the 31 May established deadline, the talks entered a phase in which some possibilities opened up. However, the possibilities have not materialized. Other than that, I would not want to make any more comments. I ask you to please change the subject. [end recording]

Meanwhile, Jorge Shafik Handal praised the willingness of some U.S. congressmen to cooperate in the investigation into the purge and reduction of the Armed Forces. He also said the best evaluation that could be done of Cristiani would be tied to mutual compliance with the country's peace plan. Concerning that, Jorge Shafik Handal could be the first opposition figure to recognize merits in Cristiani, while others have criticized his speech at the Legislative Assembly.

[Begin Shafik Handal recording] Although it is fair to recognize that Cristiani displayed responsibility and even courage by signing the agreements, we have yet to see the implementation of the same. The evaluation of his administration will depend on that point. [end recording]

Regarding the ordinary session of Copaz [National Commission for the Consolidation of Peace], which beginning on 3 June will be temporarily coordinated by the UDN [Nationalist Democratic Union], the Copaz representatives officially informed the press about the possible points on the agenda for 3 June.

Guatemala

Government Minister Hurtado on DEA Role

PA0406010992 Guatemala City EL GRAFICO in Spanish 30 May 92 p 3

[Text] Fernando Hurtado Prem, Guatemalan government minister, has said that the DEA does not have any legal power in Guatemala and that it only supports the security forces, particularly the National Police and the Treasury Police, in the fight against drug trafficking.

That is necessary, the minister said, because the Guatemalan authorities cannot fight and control drug traffickers on their own. Drug traffickers have far greater financial resources at their disposal.

The DEA participates in extraditions, however, because Guatemalan authorities must hand over the accused persons to the U.S. authorities. The DEA agents receive them in the name of the U.S. Government.

It is certain, Hurtado said, that the DEA takes every security measure to preclude either an attack against the accused person or an attempt to escape. Extraditions, he said, are very special cases requiring every possible control measure.

Nevertheless, he pointed out, the power belongs to the Guatemalan security forces. They relinquish control of the accused persons only when such persons are handed over to the U.S. authorities.

During the most recent extraditions, in particular that of Evelio Quiroz, the DEA overreached its power because it not only interfered with the work of journalists, photographers, and television cameramen, but went so far as to abuse and attack them directly.

The media are aware of the DEA role in Guatemala and know that it works in cooperation with local authorities. The DEA must, however, be aware of the media's role and their duty to inform the public. Consequently, the attacks are unjustified.

Honduras

Presidency Communique on Election Participation

PA0306194692 Tegucigalpa LA TRIBUNA in Spanish 3 Jun 92 p 3

[Communique issued by the Press Secretariat of the Presidency of the Republic in Tegucigalpa on 2 June]

[Text] 1. President Rafael Leonardo Callejas Romero, in his capacity as leader of the executive branch responsible for the general administration of the government, informs the Honduran people of the following:

2. In order to maintain the harmony and dynamics that has characterized his administration, on 2 June the president made the following call to all officials who: intend to run for office; are members of the different recognized political parties; and who work in the executive branch, decentralized and government institutions, and autonomous and semiautonomous entities:

All citizens included above who intend to participate in the internal elections of their political parties on the established election dates must proceed to request, on a timely basis, the corresponding permit or must submit their resignation in keeping with the legal procedures. Following these guidelines, we will prevent party politics from interfering with the work of government administration.

[issued] Tegucigalpa, M.D.C.

2 June 1992

Press Secretariat of the Presidency of the Republic

Nicaragua

Leal Comments on Suspension of U.S. Aid

PA0406180492 Managua EL NUEVO DIARIO in Spanish 3 Jun 92 p 12

[By Maria Lourdes Tercero]

[Text] The Nicaraguan Government, through its Foreign Minister Ernesto Leal, on 2 June challenged U.S. plans openly by stating that "the democratic process will not deviate one millimeter from Mrs. Chamorro's plans." Leal told a large number of local and foreign reporters that "the process is irreversible."

Sources close to legislators who requested the freezing of aid to Nicaragua reported that the country could lose the aid permanently should it fail to implement the reforms Washington "suggested."

Leal reaffirmed at the news conference that "we will accept no conditions." He reported that the Nicaraguan diplomatic mission accredited in the United States is trying to determine which arguments presented by Republican Senator Jesse Helms led to the suspension of the disbursement of $100 million of the $202 million. The aid had been approved for Nicaragua in 1992. He said repeatedly that the aid had been duly approved by the U.S. Government and Department of State and some disbursements had already been made.

Foreign Minister Leal said: "They are entitled to their opinions about how we should carry out reforms, but we will continue to follow our own guidelines. We will continue to tackle the problems of property and professionalization of the police and Army."

The Central American presidential summit, which is scheduled to open on 4 June in Managua, will address the suspension of aid to Nicaragua, he added. "The discussion will revolve around the fact that Nicaragua has a budding democracy whose economic revival is just beginning," he added.

Leal voiced his confidence that the issue will be discussed seriously and responsibly by the Central American presidents who will certainly find a way to handle the situation. However, he added that it is we, Nicaraguans, who will solve our problems. Leal pointed out that international cooperation is very important now because economic stabilization is just beginning. He recalled that Central American presidents, since meeting in Esquipulas, have noted there should be no conditioned international cooperation.

Leal announced a meeting of economy ministers to discuss general aspects of Central America's payment schedule. The agenda for the meeting will be revealed during a news conference at 1700 on 3 June at the Camino Real Hotel.

Foreign Minister Leal said everything is ready for the Central American presidential summit, which will begin on 4 June. He said the economy ministers have already met and the foreign ministers will meet on 3 June. Leal added that the prime minister of Belize is expected to arrive in Managua on the afternoon of 3 June. President Endara of Panama is expected one hour later. The arrival of Presidents Calderon of Costa Rica, Menem of Argentina, Serrano of Guatemala, and Callejas of Honduras is expected on 4 June.

The declaration and issues on the agenda will be reviewed on 3 June and 4 June and will be handed over to the presidents for their consideration. The Central

American agenda for the Rio summit is also ready. It contains a number of recommendations on society's development and environmental protection.

Assemblymen Appeal

PA0506035092 Managua LA PRENSA in Spanish 3 Jun 92 p 5

["Patriotic Declaration" issued by 50 members of the National Assembly in Managua on 2 June]

[Text] We 50 representatives of the National Assembly of the Republic of Nicaragua—chosen by 92 deputies—aware of the fact that we represent a legitimate majority, address the Nicaraguan people and the world to report that on 2 June we tried to present the following draft for an official declaration to the Board of Directors of the National Assembly. The draft states full support for the efforts undertaken by the President of the Republic to achieve the reinstatement of U.S. aid to Nicaragua. The president of the National Assembly prevented us from presenting the draft by denying us permission to speak.

Draft Declaration

The National Assembly of the Republic of Nicaragua, in light of:

1. The justified preoccupation of President Violeta Barrios de Chamorro for us to issue a declaration stating support for the U.S. aid to Nicaragua and for the disbursements of the said aid to be made without delay; and

2. The fact the economic reforms and the structural measures being implemented in Nicaragua are necessary for the economic reactivation of the country, and that any delay in the promised foreign aid jeopardizes the social stability and the efforts by the Nicaraguan people to overcome the economic crisis;

The National Assembly, using its authority and by unanimous decision of the sovereign plenum, declares:

Its full support to the President of the Republic, the government, and the people of Nicaragua regarding the efforts undertaken to achieve the delivery, without delay, of the U.S. aid. The aid is vital for the continuation and strengthening of the democratic process and the economic plan being implemented by the Nicaraguan Government with the support of the productive and labor sectors of the country, which will not be able to subsist if the aid does not arrive on time.

Through this patriotic gesture of solidarity, we urge the U.S. Congress to expedite the delivery of the promised aid.

[Issued] Managua, 2 June 1992.

[Signed] [Fifty signatures follow]

Party Pronouncement

PA0406201092 Managua Radio Corporacion in Spanish 2200 GMT 3 June 92

[Text] An official pronouncement issued by the Social Democratic Party states that U.S. democracy has traditionally been at our side at all of our country's critical moments, most recently during the economic, cultural, and technological crisis in which the Sandinist government submerged us. After the Nicaraguan people's victory over Sandinist totalitarianism, the United States came forward again with economic aid. The Sandinist influence over President Violeta Chamorro's democratic government, however, could not go unnoticed by the most developed and well-informed country in the world. That explains the message sent by U.S. congressmen to Presidency Minister Antonio Lacayo, published in the 1 June edition of BARRICADA. The political collusion, condemned by the Nicaraguan people, has become evident. The Sandinists have found fault with National Assembly President Alfredo Cesar because he dared to warn that noncompliance by the Chamorro Government in fulfilling its commitments to the Nicaraguan people—who supported the presidential campaign along with the international community in 1990—could jeopardize the disbursement of foreign aid. Cesar was able to foresee that, thanks to the political intuition he has demonstrated so many times.

The Social Democratic Party strongly believes that it is naive to keep trying to fool the Nicaraguan people, because they know who is who; they know who does what. There is no need to find a scapegoat, because the people know the ones really to blame are those who seek to continue governing from the top with the support of the military. In so doing, they intend to indefinitely prolong the looting, not only of the nation's riches by way of the pinata-like giveaway, but by taking the emergency aid that the democratic nations of the world are so generously giving us.

Government Said To Reject Army Reduction Plan

PA0306145592 Managua Radio Sandino in Spanish 1830 GMT 2 Jun 92

[Text] A source very close to General Humberto Ortega Saavedra told Radio Sandino that President Chamorro's government rejected a proposal by the military chief to reduce the size of the Sandinist People's Army [EPS] by 7,000. According to our source, the president said that her government currently does not have the necessary resources to grant compensation similar to that already given to thousands of soldiers already discharged from the institution. Meanwhile, the Armed Forces' high command is not willing to make any further reductions unless the government makes a commitment to offer economic security for at least six months to those to be discharged.

According to our source, the new reduction of military personnel involves those with ranks from second lieutenant to captain. Of the 7,000 EPS members to be

retired. 50 percent of them correspond to the civilian force that supports the EPS.

Panama

Government Recognizes Croatia, Slovenia as Nations

PA0306183592 Panama City CRITICA LIBRE in Spanish 3 Jun 92 p 20

[Excerpts] The Panamanian Government has recognized the Republics of Croatia and Slovenia through executive decree Nos. 152 and 153 of 28 May 1992, according to a Foreign Ministry bulletin.

The former republics of the former Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia declared their independence on 25 June 1991 and established themselves as free and independent nations, despite the bloody civil war that resulted from the secession. According to the bulletin, the respective Governments of Croatia and Slovenia requested the Republic of Panama's recognition. [passage omitted]

Panama has maintained diplomatic and trade relations with Yugoslavia. Yugoslavia's reaction to the Panamanian Government's recognition of Croatia and Slovenia is unknown.

Argentina

Menem-Firmenich 'Political Agreement' Denied

PY0306230892 Buenos Aires BUENOS AIRES HERALD in English 3 Jun 92 p 11

[Excerpt] (DYN-NA)—The government emphatically denied yesterday that President Carlos Menem and former Montonero leader Mario Firmenich had reached a political agreement which cleared the way for the presidential pardons to take place in 1990. Firmenich, who headed the Montoneros Peronist guerrilla faction during the early 70's, made the allegations on Monday [2 June] night during a TV interview with journalist Enrique Llamas de Maradiaga broadcast by Channel 9.

In a communique released yesterday, the government said it had reached no agreement with Firmenich, stating that "a pact setting conditions for the national pacification promised in the 1989 campaign" had not been agreed with the Montonero leadership.

The official statement was echoed by Provisional Senate head and acting President Eduardo Menem. "There was no pact with Mr. Firmenich," he said.

The former head of Montoneros had revealed last Monday in the interview that he had struck a political deal with Menem and added that "we shared with Menem a series of stances and were willing to look to the future and leave the past behind," at the time the President was analyzing a possible amnesty or pacification law which concluded with the presidential pardons granted to the Montoneros and the military junta leaders via a decree signed in December 28, 1990. [passage omitted]

Brazil

U.S. Funds for Forest Protection Granted

PY0506031892 Brasilia Radio Nacional da Amazonia Network in Portuguese 1000 GMT 4 Jun 92

[Text] Foreign Minister Celso Lafer has reported that Brazil will be the first country to receive part of the $150 million to be disbursed by U.S. President George Bush for the protection of rain forests.

Lafer said the effective decrease of deforestation in the Amazon region during the two years of the Collor administration appeals to the United States.

Collor Answers Bush Letter on Forest Preservation

PY0506023492 Brasilia Voz do Brasil Network in Portuguese 2200 GMT 4 Jun 92

[Excerpts] At the Riocenter today, President Fernando Collor released the contents of a letter he received from U.S. President George Bush on 31 May. Collor also referred to Brazil's answer to the U.S. Government.

President Collor noted with satisfaction a U.S. initiative to promote the preservation of forests and the use of forests in a sustainable way. [passage omitted]

In his reply, President Collor said that the additional funds for developing countries in which there are forests will produce more dynamic international cooperation, adding that such cooperation can be improved if rich countries share technology for the sustained management of various types of forests with developing countries.

President Bush will arrive in Brazil on 12 June to attend the final part of the Rio-92 [UN Conference on Environment and Development] conference.

Colombia

Government Turns Down Guerrilla Proposal

PA0406043192 Santa Fe de Bogota Inravision Television Cadena 1 in Spanish 2300 GMT 3 Jun 92

[Text] On 3 June, the Colombian Government turned down the Guerrilla Coordinating Board's [CG] proposal. It was presented by Senate President Carlos Espinosa. According to the government, it is a forgettable proposal, without future or schedule, and devoid of peaceful intentions. The government, however, expressed willingness to listen to new proposals and maintains the validity of the position taken in Tlaxcala, Mexico.

The government is sure that the proposal represents a step backward from the Tlaxcala talks. It is also evident that the CG insists on regional talks because it wants to gain political ground and become the mouthpiece for a population it does not represent.

The government document insists that the peace policy's fundamental objective is to put an end to the fighting. For that reason, the guerrilla proposal to talk peace while shooting is not attractive. The document added that there is nothing new in the proposal other than trying to create a diversion so as to maintain a dialogue without future. Nevertheless, the government has stressed its willingness to talk and explore other proposals to reach an understanding.

On 3 June however, the government ruled out the possibility of resuming negotiations with the CG this year. The government ruled out a scheduled 31 October meeting, determined in Tlaxcala.

The Senate president returned from Tlaxcala with a peace plan in his briefcase. The CG's proposal comprises three stages: A preparatory commission representing all groups that will negotiate an agreement on human rights. The commission's two-month term implies a cease-fire. In the next six months, a National Agreement Council would reach a consensus on political, economic, and social matters. In the third stage, a popular consultation would culminate in a reinstatement process. The experience of 10 years of dialogue has taught the government to be wary. According to Peace Adviser Horacio Serpa

Uribe, the CG's proposal includes items that the government had proposed and the guerrillas had turned down in Tlaxcala.

According to the deputy government minister, the regional talks proposed in the second stage represent an unacceptable coexistence of the guerrillas and the people. This is the deputy government minister:

[Begin recording] The intensification of violence leads us to believe that we could not sit down and talk if the present situation prevails until 31 October. [end recording]

The Communist Party of Colombia and the Patriotic Unity have reported that the government is not willing to accept the proposal because accepting it would weaken the government's military offensive against the guerrillas.

Venezuela

Perez Announces 'Crackdown' on Student Protests

PA0406180292 Paris AFP in Spanish 1654 GMT 4 Jun 92

[Excerpts] Caracas, 4 Jun (AFP)—Venezuelan President Carlos Andres Perez announced on 4 June that he will strongly crack down on the violent disturbances that follow student protests, which have resumed in the capital and surrounding areas.

In a nationwide radio address, Perez announced a head-on struggle against individuals and extreme left groups that take advantage of the student protests to "promote a new rebel adventure." [passage omitted]

There are even rumors about a new suspension of constitutional guarantees, especially the right to strike and stage demonstrations. "As president, I have never restricted the demonstrations of citizens because the protest is an instrument that benefits the leaders who know how to take advantage of it; and the protest by youth sectors are even more justified," Perez stated.

"But here we are dealing with a subversive action, organized by people who for years have maintained a past of violence. They have viewed the 4 February events as an opportunity to submerge Venezuela in violence," the president explained. "I want to state categorically that, as president and commander in chief of the Armed Forces, I am not ready to tolerate the extremist aspiration of promoting a new rebel adventure," he added.

Perez recalled his past as interior minister of late former President Romulo Betancourt (1959-64), when he led the harsh military, police, and political struggle against what he called "Castro communism."

"We are ready to maintain the most serious and severe attitude. The Venezuelan people know that I know how to face the situation posed by the adventurers. I beat them in the past, and I will beat them again today," Perez concluded.

Interior Minister Denies Rights Suspended

PA0506020392 Caracas Venezolana de Television Network in Spanish 0004 GMT 5 Jun 92

[Text] Venezuelan Interior Minister Luis Pinerua Ordaz stated that constitutional rights have not been suspended as the result of the disturbances in the country. He said, however, that if the situation persists, much stronger measures will be taken. The minister also said that those who have sponsored the acts of violence in the country are perpetrating a crime against the young people by leading them to commit punishable actions for which they would be permanently marked. Pinerua affirmed that guerrilla leaders of the 1960's are involved in the subversive incidents, and that is proven by the fact that the students' actions are not spontaneous.

Angel Zambrano, head of the Central Office of Information [OCI], said that the events are due to an escalation of violence that has been stimulated at the schools. The OCI head said that a general effort should be made to preclude the paralyzation of the educational centers.

[Begin recording] [Pinerua] I have been given the name of the student organization where all the activities have been organized.

[Zambrano] Decisions will be made as events develop. Nevertheless, we believe that a general effort should be made to avoid the paralyzation of the schools. Such an action would make it difficult to complete the school year. There must be a minimum of hours of classes to complete the school year. [end recording]

Defense Ministry Communique on Newspaper Report

PA0506025792 Caracas Venezolana de Television in Spanish 0026 GMT 5 Jun 92

[Communique issued by the Venezuelan Defense Ministry in Caracas on 5 June]

[Text] The Defense Ministry emphatically rejects the information that appeared in the 4 June EL NACIONAL newspaper, pages A-1 and D-1. It also asserts the apocryphal character of the document on which the information is based.

Contrary to that false information, there is absolute tranquillity in the Armed Forces. The military institution maintains its internal unity with rigorous adherence to constitutional order and total compliance with the principles of subordination and obedience, which governs its actions.

The Defense Ministry manifests to the country that the alleged document, mentioned in the newspaper, did not emanate from the Military Intelligence Directorate.

The Defense Ministry has ordered the corresponding jurisdictional office to investigate the case, as the events

reported in the inaccurate newspaper publication could involve illegal actions mentioned in the military criminal law.

Military Intelligence Communique Rebuts Report

PA0506044592 Caracas Venezolana de Television Network in Spanish 0000 GMT 5 Jun 92

[Communique issued by Brigadier General Jose De La Cruz Pineda, director general of the Directorate of Military Intelligence in Caracas on 4 June]

[Text] The Directorate of Military Intelligence hereby reports that its specific mission is to produce strategic intelligence reports for the Venezuelan state through the Armed Forces to help ensure the security and defense of the nation and serve as an auxiliary branch for the military justice authorities.

Therefore, the elaboration of an alleged report attributed to this directorate and published by a local newspaper on 4 June 1992, does not correspond with the aforementioned objectives, nor with the ethics or professional level of the military and civilian personnel currently under my command.

[Issued] Caracas, 4 June 1992.

[Signed] Brigadier General Jose De La Cruz Pineda, director general of Military Intelligence.